

THE SILVER AGE OF COMIC BOOK ART

BY ARLEN SCHUMER



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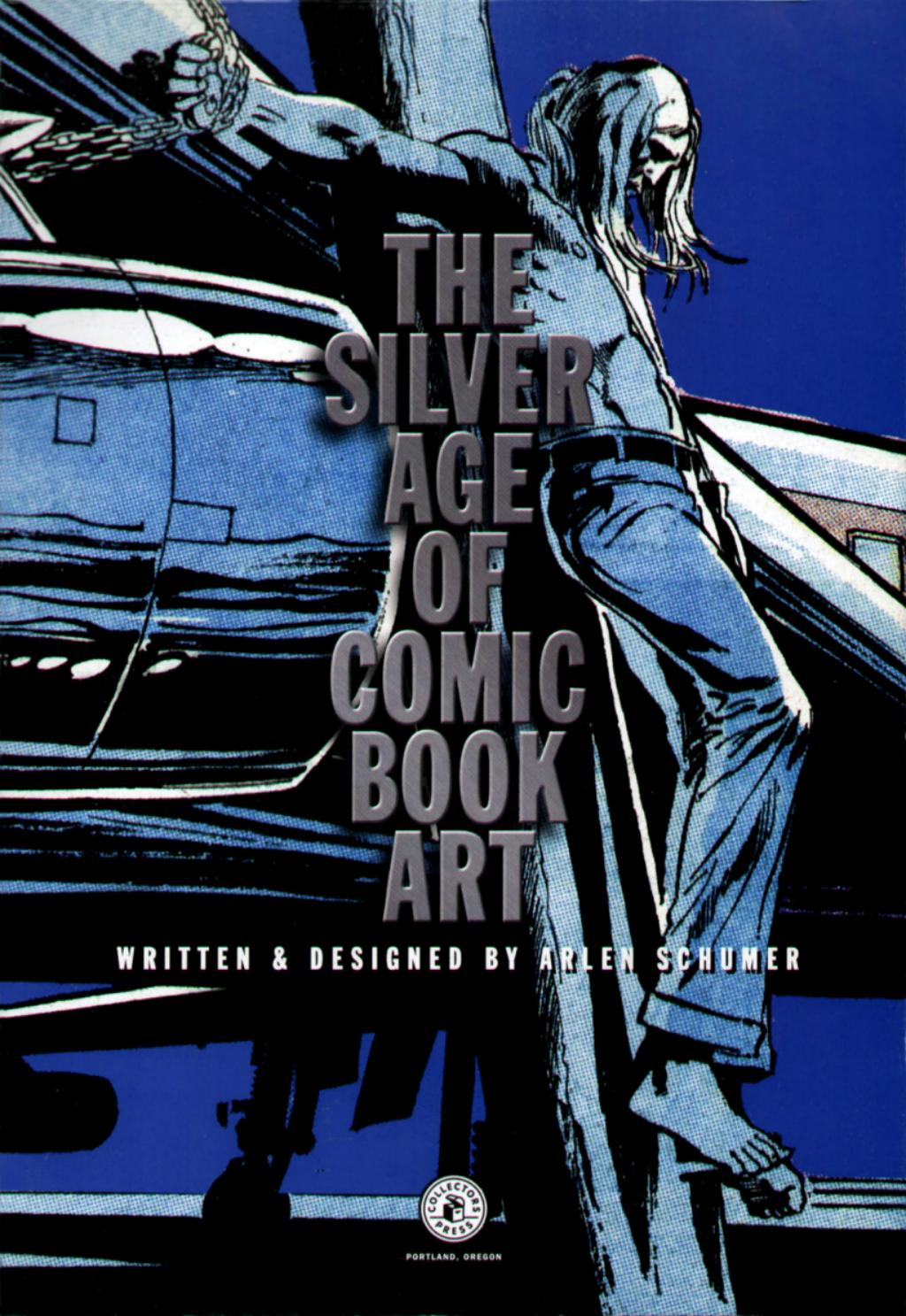
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THE SILVER AGE OF COMIC BOOK ART

WRITTEN & DESIGNED BY ARLEN SCHUMER



PORTLAND, OREGON

P R E F A C E

by Arlen Schumer

The genesis of this book began almost 25 years ago, when I was a senior at Rhode Island School of Design, majoring in graphic design. For my degree project, I toyed with designing an exhibit of comic book art. When I went looking for a theme, the only subject that seemed both worthwhile of my passion for the material and deep enough for the demands of the assignment was one based on the comics I grew up with in the 1960s. These comics and the artists who drew them were the twin founts from which I drew the inspiration to become an artist. Though I never did design that exhibit (I ended up doing a giant autobiographical photo-comic instead), I kept the ideas and images that I gathered, in the hopes that one day I'd use them in some other form. Many of those 1979 layouts are the same ones I've used in this book. Indeed, my introduction—in which I place the images and ideas you'll encounter throughout this book in a socio-political, historical framework—is composed of essentially the identical concepts from my aborted exhibit idea.

The idea to do a book on this period of comic book history goes back even further, to 1970, when Jim Steranko wrote, designed and published the first of his two-volume *History of Comics*. Written on the heels of his amazing barnstorming stint at Marvel Comics (see his chapter here), these books remain the best of their kind. They were—and continue to be—a source of inspiration. Though Steranko's books were about the Golden Age of Comics (circa 1938–1950), the period he grew up with and was affected by, not the Silver Age of Comics (circa 1956–1972) that I, and the entire baby boom generation, was turned on to.

Steranko himself might have been inspired by the first great book about comic book history, Jules Feiffer's 1965 *The Great Comic Book Heroes*. Feiffer's book consists of wonderfully written, witty essays on specific Golden Age superheroes he followed avidly as a boy, accompanied by reprints of the origins or earliest adventures of those heroes. Feiffer may not have realized what it was like for me, an eight year-old comic book fan in 1966, to hear that there was actually a book in the Fair Lawn, New Jersey public library about comics!

But Feiffer's book, as serendipitous as it was, was also not about the heroes or the artists I was interested in, artists who rank among the greatest American artists of the Twentieth (and Twenty-First) Century. There has never been a coffeetable book celebrating their work, showing the actual printed comic book art—with ben-day dots on cheap newsprint—as it was transmitted to and perceived by the readership. Other books have been illustrated with the black and white original art, and as beautiful as that is, that's production art, as far as I'm concerned. The recent spate of reprints, though they serve a noble purpose, remove the original coloring and replace it with garish colors on harsh white paper.

Although most of the comics in those days were poorly printed, with off-registration rampant, there was something beautiful about them, too. In trying to capture the integrity of the original printed art while also "cleaning" it up, I assumed the role of art restorer: not recoloring, but retouching. I took license here and there to drop out the original word balloon and caption text in favor of artists' quotes or my own prose. My justification is that this book is not about the characters per se, nor is it about the "stories." There are plenty of books about both topics, and this book is not a substitute for either type; of course the play's the thing. I wanted to create, instead, the first true

art book about comic book artists and their work. Therefore, my entire design approach—utilizing reliefs, drop shadows and enlargements—has been to treat each spread as if it were a 13-foot by 18-foot museum wall exhibit. I suppose I have come full circle, with me as your curator, exhibiting—for the first time—the glorious artwork by the greatest artists of our generation.

And that, in the end, is the true genesis of this book: I am of the generation that spent countless hours—upon days, and into years—reading and studying and collecting and drawing from these sacred comic books. I shared—and still share—those happy, special times with really only one other person in the world. And that is why this book is dedicated to my best friend, my mentor, and the real editor of this book: my brother Steve.

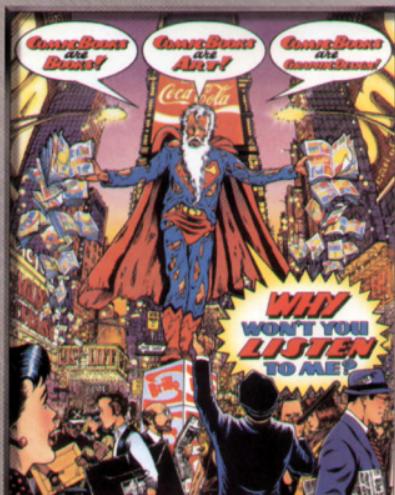


Illustration by the author and his wife, color artist Sherri Wolfgang (as the Dynamic Duo Studio) for the "Design Scene" Visual Commentary end page in the July/August 1992 issue of *Print*.

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INTRODUCTION

IN THE SILVER AGE OF COMICS (CIRCA 1956-1970), superheroes started out as champions but ended up as chumps. They went from being self-confident heroes to fallen idols who doubted and questioned the very authorities that had made them de facto deputies in the fight against evil. Evil was no longer delineated in the same black and white terms that had previously defined the superheroes' four-color existences, but was now limned in shades of grey. Superheroes went through the same transformation the rest of America's heroes went through in the 1960s when racial strife, political assassinations and the Vietnam War exacted their toll on the country's spirit and vision of itself. Before the superhero took a place in the American heroic pantheon, the kind of cowboys and soldiers John Wayne played in the

movies had been the heroic ideal. This heroic archetype however, all but vanished by the end of the decade, replaced by antiheroes in films like Bonnie & Clyde and Midnight Cowboy, the motorcycle jockeys of Easy Rider, the diffident docs of M.A.S.H. – all soldiers of a sort fighting their own wars against the establishment.

Similarly, superheroes in comic books, establishment conservatives like Superman, The Flash and Green Lantern, were displaced by super-antiheroes, counterculture liberals like Spider-Man, Doctor Strange, and

Inset this page: The apotheosis of the early 1960s DC Comics technohero the Atom in exalted gratitude to science and technology, as rendered by Gil Kane & Murphy Anderson, from Showcase #34, Oct. 1961, the character's first appearance. **Inset, opposite:** A decade later, attitudes toward technology had changed. A protestor goes to extreme lengths to stop the SST. It was Neal Adams' realistic style that helped make attempts like this one from Green Lantern/Green Arrow #89, May 1972 not only possible, but believable.



Green Arrow. Even the look of comic book art reflected this changing of the guard as the early 1960s futuristic idealism of artists Carmine Infantino and Gil Kane gave way first to the pop explosion of Jack Kirby, then to the late 1960s psychedelia of Jim Steranko and the photorealism of Neal Adams.

Like the American youth counterculture that reached its apogee in the 1960s from germinations in the 1950s Beat generation, the superhero comic-counterculture of the 1960s also flowered from seeds planted in the previous decade at the dawn of the Silver Age when events in both the real and comic book worlds coincided. The Soviets' surprise launching of Sputnik in 1957 shocked America out of its Eisenhower-era complacency and into scientific

action, centered around speed (with which to beat the Russians), space (the target), and technology (the means to get there). Just as in the old "hot" war, when superheroes like Captain America aided the war efforts at home by hawking war bonds and

Background: Carmine Infantino's early 1960s suburban-modern milieu, inked by Anderson, from The Flash #152, May 1965. "This was my idea of what suburbia should look like," Infantino said.

"I grew up with the old Andy Hardy movies, where everything's kind of picture perfect!"



*The Flash #1, Jan. 1940,
by Sheldon Moldoff.*

*Green Lantern #1, Fall 1943,
by Howard Purcell.*

*The Atom, from All-Star Comics #3,
Winter 1940, by Ben Plinton.*

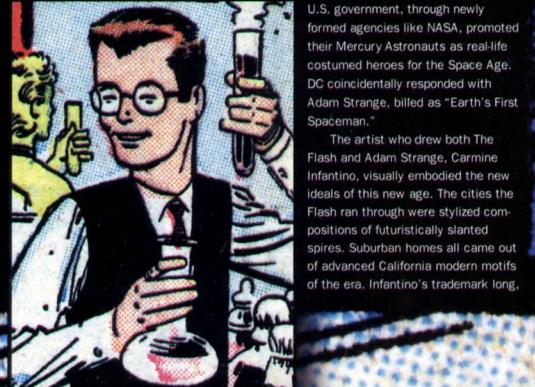
*Panel, from The Flash #149, Dec.
1964, by Infantino and Anderson.*

*Double-page pinup, from
Green Lantern #46, Jul. 1966,
by Gil Kane.*

*Double-page pinup, from
The Atom #28, Sep. 1966, by Kane.*



Background: Steve Ditko placed Spider-Man in a drab New York City setting (final panel of *Amazing Fantasy* #15, Aug. 1962) that perfectly matched his status as the 1960s first super-anthero. Above: Police scientist Barry Allen, from *The Flash* #148, Nov. 1964, by Infantino and Anderson. Below: High school science student Peter Parker, from *Amazing Fantasy* #15, by Ditko.



striking patriotic cover poses, this new Cold War called for its own superhero standard bearers. It was no wonder then that DC Comics, which had been trolling for new genres to exploit after most of their World War II-spawned superheroes had died out years before for lack of popularity, ignited a second superhero boom when it began its new foray into the superhero field with remodeled, higher-tech versions of their mothballed war heroes: super-speedster The Flash (who doubled as police scientist Barry Allen), power ring-wielding outer space adventurer Green Lantern (alias Hal Jordan, test pilot with the right stuff), and The Atom (research scientist Ray Palmer) who had the ability to shrink to microscopic size (in stark contrast to his 1940s counterpart who was merely a diminutive strongman). The U.S. government, through newly formed agencies like NASA, promoted their Mercury Astronauts as real-life costumed heroes for the Space Age. DC coincidentally responded with Adam Strange, billed as "Earth's First Spaceman."

The artist who drew both The Flash and Adam Strange, Carmine Infantino, visually embodied the new ideals of this new age. The cities the Flash ran through were stylized compositions of futuristic slanted spires. Suburban homes all came out of advanced California modern motifs of the era. Infantino's trademark long,



low panels filled with trim, lithe figures were as sleek and streamlined as the fins Detroit was sporting on all its cars of the era. Everything Infantino drew reflected the crystal-clear images of America promulgated then by Hollywood and Madison Avenue in its entertainment and advertising. As the country headed into an unprecedented era of wealth and prosperity with eyes toward the future, Infantino's style mirrored these ethereal notions more accurately than his DC contemporaries, Curt Swan, Joe Kubert and Gil Kane, and perhaps better than any other comic book artist of his time.

But over at Marvel Comics, where Kirby and writer/editor Stan Lee were beginning to challenge DC's hegemony in the superhero field with offbeat creations like The Fantastic Four and The Hulk, artist Steve Ditko's pages were bleak and grey, peopled by equally drab characters of plain, everyman appearance. As co-created by Ditko and Lee in 1962, Spider-Man's alter ego, Peter Parker, was a shy, weak, laughed-at and pushed-around eghead. More importantly, though,

Above right: The Flash, typical slickly rendered DC Comics establishment hero, over thirty years of age, self-assured and respectful of authority, spouting dialogue the likes of which would be heard later on the 1966 *Batman* TV show, from *The Flash* #149, Dec. 1964, by Infantino and Anderson. Right: In contrast, Ditko's appealingly primitive style and harsher, cruder approach made Spider-Man, and Stan Lee's dialogue, ring true, from *Amazing Fantasy* #15.



A doctor and his mentor, pictured in two different forms of early 1960s American popular media. **Below:** Television's Ben Casey (actor Vince Edwards) practiced western medicine under the aegis of Dr. David Zorba (Sam Jaffe), 1963.



Right: Ditko's Dr. Strange and the Ancient One engaged in an ectoplasmic visualization of Eastern mystic mind-melding from the splash panel of *Strange Tales* #137, Oct. 1965.

he was a teenager, unlike all of DC's new techno-heroes who were over thirty years old, the "parents" to Marvel's super-youth. Spider-Man also exhibited other differences — like initially wanting to make money from his new powers instead of fighting crime. These characteristics set him apart from the DC pantheon, anticipating the generation gap that was to split America later in the decade and qualified him as comicdom's breakout super-anti-hero. Indeed, the title of one of the very first mainstream media reports on Spider-Man and the Marvel Comics revolution was "Super-Anti-Hero in Forest Hills" by Sally Kempton in the April 1, 1965 *Village Voice*, in which she noted that Marvel's were "the first [superhero] comic books to evoke, even metaphorically, the Real World," and Spider-Man particularly



was one of the first in which "a post-adolescent escapist can get personally involved."

The other feature Ditko created in 1963, Dr. Strange, was as prescient in forecasting what was to become another major touchstone of the decade. Woven throughout the saga of a washed-up American surgeon who becomes an enlightened super-sorcerer were bizarre, surrealistic visualizations never before seen in comic books, all uniquely Ditko's, which had a wide-ranging influence on the proto-counterculture that was beginning to use LSD to open new doors of perception into fantasy worlds that were distinctively Ditko-like. "He sits for hours on end reading comic books," Tom Wolfe wrote in *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* of Merry Prankster Ken Kesey, who, while traveling on his Magic Bus spreading the LSD gospel across America in 1964, was "absorbed in the plunging purple Steve Ditko shadows of Dr. Strange..." Those shadows foreshadowed the psychedelic graphics of the late-'60s San Francisco rock music poster school — the very first posters for shows at Bill Graham's famous Fillmore West Ballroom in 1967 that specifically featured homages and pastiches of Doctor Strange — and many other Marvel superheroes, all of whom were crafted in similar degrees of antiheroism.

Below: For his 1967 poster for the Youngbloods concert at San Francisco's California Hall, artist Greg Irons borrowed the Dr. Strange pose from the Jack Kirby-drawn logo box, that debuted on the cover of *Strange Tales* #142, Mar. 1966.



Right: The artist "San Andreas Fault" lifted a Ditko Dr. Strange face (above) from *Strange Tales* #132, May 1965, for this 1969 Quicksilver Messenger Service/Bob Seger concert poster, but added "Homage to Steve Ditko" along with a "Marvel Comix (sic) Group" copyright notice. **Far right:** Program cover designed by Peter Bailey for the 1966 Trips Festival in San Francisco.

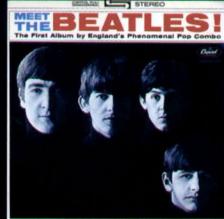




THE FIRST FAB FOUR

As DC writer Arnold Drake observed about Marvel's growing popularity in a memo to DC's publisher in 1966, "The antihero was lifted from the hardcover books and slick magazines and brought to the kids.... [Marvel] succeeded for two reasons primarily. First, they were more in tune with what was happening in the country than we were. And perhaps more important, they aimed their stuff at an age level that had never read comics before in any impressive number — the college level." Esquire Magazine evidently agreed, noting this burgeoning college inflation in a September 1966 feature article that opined, "Marvel's super-heroes, in spite of their super-powers, have super problems. And that's why your college buddies are flipping over them." Like the anonymous Ivy Leaguer who was quoted at one of Lee's growing number of college lecture circuit stops, "We think of Marvel Comics as the

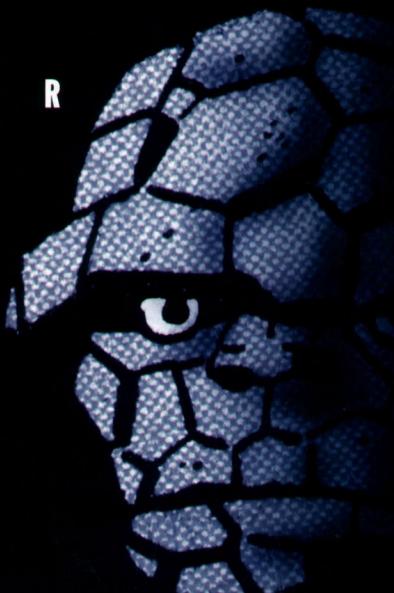
twentieth-century mythology and you as this generation's Homer." The art wasn't overlooked either (the article



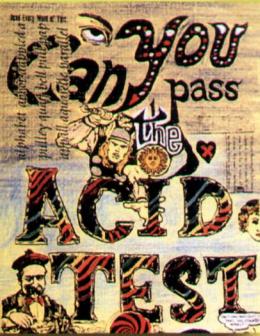
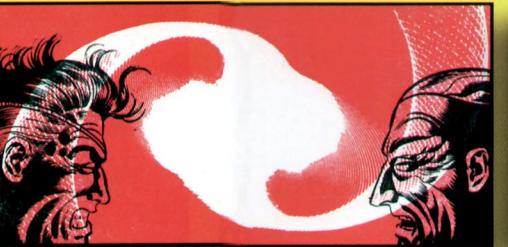
Background: The *Fantastic Four* had the same impact on mainstream comic books in the 1960s as the Fab Four had on rock and roll (and would have scooped the Beatles had Marvel publisher Martin Goodman not changed Lee's original title for the group, the *Fabulous Four*, right before publication of the first issue in 1961). Illustration based on art by Jack Kirby, inked by Joe Sinnott, from *Fantastic Four* #44, Nov. 1965, after the *Meet the Beatles* album cover (inset), 1964 (photo by Robert Freeman).

itself snappily illustrated by none other than Kirby himself) when a Cornell University student, shown in silhouette next to a Kirby Dr. Strange, gushed that Marvels were "beautifully illustrated, to a nearly hallucinogenic extent. Even the simple mortal hero stories are illustrated with every panel as dramatically composed as anything Orson Welles ever put on film." Knowing what we know now about their careers and Marvel's eventual dominance, the 1960s juggernaut team of Lee and Kirby can be seen as the Lennon and McCartney of comics, just as prolific, just as startling, their work similarly developing in scope and profundity at an exponential rate. By 1967, they too were in the midst of the most creatively psychedelic phase of their work, having just unleashed a slew of cosmic characters and concepts, including The Silver Surfer, Galactus, and The Black Panther, in dizzying, dazzling succession.

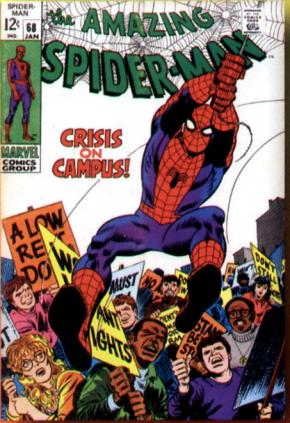
DC never quite knew how to respond to Marvel but did "answer" Dr. Strange in the fall of 1967 with its own quasi-mystical character, Deadman, in the pages of the coincidentally titled *Strange Adventures*. Created by writer Drake and illustrated by the ubiquitous Infantino, Deadman was a daredevil trapeze artist shot dead in mid-swing, only to miraculously revive as a ghost with the power to inhabit the bodies of the living, thus enabling him to search for his killer. Within this premise, Drake was able to intertwine his take on the newly-fashionable (thanks largely to the Beatles) Eastern theories of reincarnation (Deadman's spiritual benefactor went by the Hindu-sounding name of Rama Kushna) with a lift from the recently concluded TV series *The Fugitive* in which the series star searched episode after episode for his wife's killer, a one-armed man (Deadman's killer instead had a hook in place of a missing hand).



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Early this year, the author of Marvel Comics received a letter from William F. Buckley, Jr., editor of the *New York Review of Books*. He wrote, "I would like to order a copy of 'How to Read a Comic Book' for my issue number 46 ('Who Would Believe in the Human Spirit?'). It is a welcome corrective to the current course in contemporary American literature. I hope that you will accept my thanks, and I hope that in them they will not be too far removed from the basic policies at work which would give them the right to be accepted as today." There is evidence that college students are already doing this.

Princeton University, for instance, invited Stan Lee, author of Marvel's best selling comic book series, to speak at its annual series that also included M.M.M.M., the Princeton Review, and the Princeton Review of Books. And in the fall, of course, Lee will be a speaker at the annual Princeton Marathon, which is the only Marvel marathon, it might be noted, that is run in Princeton, New Jersey, and not in the one out of eight thousand others. As one dry language told

Stan Lee: "We think of Marvel Comics as the most contemporary mythology in the world."

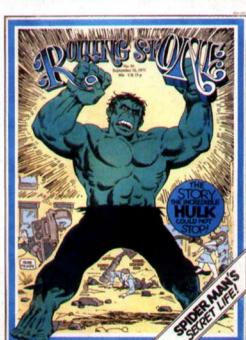
At this stage of the game it is not clear whether Lee's success is the result of Marvel Comics on the campus, or the success of Marvel Comics in the campus. Perhaps a closer reading of the following page will figure it out.

The Amazing Spider-Man



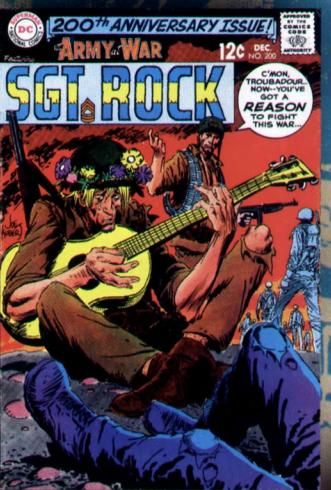
Clockwise from lower left: Iron Man, many of the leading Marvel superheroes at the time, "fought" in Vietnam, if only for an issue (splash page from *Tales of Suspense* #92, Aug. 1967, by Gene Colan, inked by Frank Giacalone); *Spider-Man* #68, Jan. 1969 by John Romita. "Spider-Man," said Stanford University student Jack Marchese in Esquire's 1966 story, "exemplifies the poor college student, beset by woes, money problems, and the question of his existence. In short, he is one of us." □ Marvel Pop Art Productions' cover logo box, used briefly during the media's love affair with Pop Art in 1968. □ Ad for the Marvel Super-Heroes animated TV series, Fall 1966, using art by Jack Kirby and Gene Colan. □ Nick Fury, Agent of S.H.I.E.L.D. psychadelically squared off against the Yellow Claw (*Strange Tales* #167, Apr. 1968 by Jim Steranko, inked by Joe Sinnott). "The '60s were a time of civil rights, the Beatles, moonshots, James Bond, Khrushchev, Vietnam—and in the comic industry, Steranko was the big news," comic artist Paul Gulacy said in 1995. "His strong sense of graphic design ran parallel with Jimi Hendrix's guitar riffs." □ The first black superhero, the Black Panther, from *Fantastic Four*

#52, July 1968, by Kirby and Sinnott. Said Kirby in a 1989 interview, "I came up with *The Black Panther* because... I suddenly discovered that I had a lot of black readers—and here I am, a leading cartoonist, and I wasn't doing a black." □ Detail from December 1965 Acid Test poster by Norman Hartweg (hand colored by Sunshine Kesey). □ Like this poster's central Thor image (based on *Journey into Mystery* #125, Feb. 1966), by Kirby and artist Vince Coletta, Marvel's superheroes were festooned on the Magic Bus of head Merry Prankster Ken Kesey (the originator of the Acid Tests), when it traveled across the country spreading then-legal LSD in 1964. □ *Rolling Stone* #91, Sep. 16, 1971, illustrated by Herb Trimpe for the feature article on Marvel Comics, "Face Front! Clap Your Hands! You're on the Winning Team!" by Robin Greene, who wrote that Stan Lee "had revolutionized the comic industry by giving his characters dimension, character, and personality." □ Centerspread: illustration for Esquire, Jan. 1966, by Kirby. "If you see my drawings in the '60s, you'll see the '60s reflected there," Kirby said in 1987. "That was what the '60s looked like..."



**STOP
THE WAR!
I WANT
TO GET
OUT!**

Background: Cover detail from *Our Army at War* #196, Aug. 1968, by Joe Kubert, for the story he also wrote, "Stop the War — I Want to Get Off!" Though it's ostensibly about Sgt. Rock, delusional from battle fatigue, hallucinating a panoply of war heroes from throughout time, resulting in a renewal of his fighting spirit, the story — and especially the cover — can easily be viewed as Kubert's sublimated reaction to the war in Vietnam. But Kubert said in 2003, "I wanted to make sure that the war books we were doing were not ones that glorified war — not just the Vietnam War, but any war. This dealt with World War II. To me, any guy that's in the army doesn't like it. But you're there because something has to be done, and you're there to do it. Period. The idea that I did this as a form of self-expression about Vietnam is not so. But at that time, I was not marching in the streets, and I was not yelling about the fact that things were quite amiss in Vietnam. I didn't know what the hell was happening there, and I think, like most people, I trusted the government to do what they were supposed to be doing. It was only later that I, like so many others, came to know what a fiasco the whole Vietnam thing was."



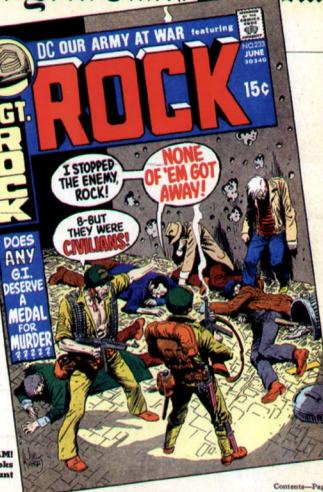
Above: *Our Army at War* #200, Dec. 1968, by Kubert. In "Ode to Sgt. Rock of Easy Co., A Story in Verse," written by Bob Kanigher, who wielded his "guitar" — literally — against the Nazis, also an anachronistic metaphor for the hippie counterculture that was protesting the war in Vietnam.

**JOE
KUBERT**



The New York Times Magazine

MAY 3, 1971
SECTION 6



Contents—Page 21

Below: The contents page caption to *The New York Times Magazine*, May 2, 1971, cover story, "Shazam! Here Comes Captain Relevant," by Saul Bann: "Sergeant Rock, a comic-book hero, confronts a psychopathic killer in his company. The story is set in World War II, but suggests more recent events — in Vietnam. The comic-book industry, which nearly died in the fifties, has rebounded by catering to a new generation's clamor for relevance." The comic book inset was *Our Army at War* #235, Jun. 1971, by Kubert. "This was Bob Kanigher's idea. Bob's story, he was telling me, was the one who did a terrific job on it. And justifiably so, the army killing civilians is wrong, terribly wrong."

Deadman might have remained little more than a footnote in comic book history had it not been for the abrupt change in art styles that occurred when Kubert left the series after one issue (to become DC's new editorial director, then publisher) and was replaced by a relative newcomer to comic books (though a wunderkind in both the advertising art and newspaper strip fields), twenty-six-year-old Neal Adams. Adams settled on the Deadman character and proceeded to, in his words, "strut his stuff." He set

the comic book world on its ear with freewheeling, cinematically influenced panel sequences and page compositions. But it was his photorealistic mastery of anatomy and human emotion that, above his other meritorious achievements, made Deadman's angst-ridden, angry antihero posturing ring truer than any in the Marvel stable of "realistic" characters. Deadman seemed, ironically, more alive than any superhero to date.

Midway through Deadman's brief run (1967-69), the character was paired with Batman and illustrated not



by the latter's regular artists, but by Adams. By this time (April '68), the Batman TV series (an overnight sensation two years prior that resulted in a superhero sales boom not seen since World War II) had just been canceled. However, the TV series had reduced the actual comic book version of the character into a two-dimensional caricature of its TV counterpart (which was itself an exaggerated blow-up of the campiest, cartooniest elements of the Batman milieu of the 1950s). Adams instinctively grasped that this team-up with Deadman would be a chance to undo years of shabby treatment and restore the character's tarnished integrity to that of its original conception as a Shadow-like creature of the night. In one fell swoop, Adams accomplished this task (and went on to illustrate Batman scripts for the next six years, becoming, arguably, the definitive Batman artist).

Exactly a year later, in the same Batman team-up title, Adams revamped a second-string DC character, Green Arrow. Green Arrow was a trick-archer who had degenerated, over the years, into a cheap copy of Batman, replete with Arrow Car, Arrow Cave, Arrow signal, ad nauseum. Adams threw out all of the character's excess baggage, redesigned his costume to emphasize a more modern-day Robin Hood resemblance, and added a mustache and goatee, which, in retrospect, was a bold gesture. Not only did it mark Green Arrow as the first superhero with facial hair, but its late-1960s timeliness hinted at a hipper personality that begged to be exploited.

That exploitation came soon enough, in 1970, when DC decided to partner Green Arrow with Green Lantern in an effort to stave off cancellation of the latter's title. By this time, in the wake of not only upward Marvel Comics' overwhelming popularity but of the declining fortunes of the



Clockwise from top left: The Real Thing: Neal Adams' Deadman, from *Strange Adventures* #208, Jan. 1968. ■ The new Green Arrow #208, Adams, from the cover of *Brave & Bold* #85, Sep. 1969. ■ The naive Green Lantern, forced to confront Adams' realistically rendered reality, got his come-uppance, from *Green Lantern/Green Arrow* #76, Apr. 1970. ■ The definitive Batman by Adams, from *Brave & Bold* #79, Sep. 1968.

stock heroic models their characters were based on, most of DC's technoheroes had fallen by the wayside. DC's sales were eroding, and their books were cancelled, just as the ideals they embodied were also crumbling in real-life America. Of all these righteously naive superheroes, who had seen the world in black and white absolutes and fought clichéd supervillains and mad scientists, while flying off into space for adventures on other worlds, Green Lantern was the most typical, the virtual personification of the American power establishment responsible for the country's presence in both Vietnam and outer space.

Adams and new scripter Denny

O'Neill, the verbal counterpart to Adams' visual hyperrealism, made good on the political potential inherent in Green Arrow's new Robin Hood appearance by injecting him with a blatant left-wing world view. "Robin Hood was the perfect antihero-rebel-fight-for-the-underdog hero model for the time," Adams said. "By making Green Arrow into a cool Robin Hood, I had served him up as an anti-establishment foil to counter Green Lantern's conforming, status quo-worshipping, white do-gooder, blind kind of 1950's creep attitude. Social consciousness was the name of the particulate game, then, and Green Arrow became the focus of that surge."



Green Arrow became Green Lantern's conscience, exposing him, over the course of a remarkable thirteen-issue run that extended into 1972, to the darker sides of 1960s America that Green Lantern — and by extension, his readers — had never directly experienced nor imagined: injustice, bigotry, poverty, pollution, overpopulation, drug abuse, greed and gross materialism. O'Neill's words rang true because Adams' art was truer to life than any comic book art had been before.

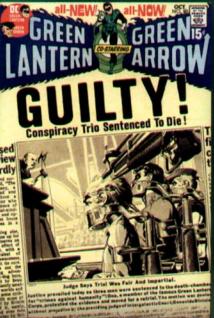
No matter that the Green Lantern/Green Arrow series was canceled prematurely, or that, after a brief flurry of knocked-off "rele-

vant" stories, superhero life in comic books reverted back to its fantasy shell for the remainder of the decade, the damage had been done. A chink had been exposed in the Silver Age armor.

Adams and O'Neill had debunked the sterile sanctimony of the DC superheroes' universe and brought them all down to earth, from an open-armed acceptance of the benevolence of science and technology, to a begrudging awareness of the corrupting consequences of power.

In comic book terms, The Sixties were over — the Silver Age of Comics had ended.

— Arlen Schumer



Neal Adams' gallery of Green Lantern/Green Arrow images (written by Denny O'Neill). Clockwise from lower left: Adams captured, during an inner-city riot, the moment of impact of a single bullet, panel from issue #87, Jan. 1972. ■ Panel from issue #85, Sep. 1971; the extreme irony of Green Arrow's sidekick "Speedy" using heroin made the cover (right), and the story within, perhaps the most memorable of the series. ■ The climactic panel from the first issue of the series, #76, Apr. 1970, showing Adams' judicious use of photo reference. ■ Torn from the headlines, the story in issue #80, Oct. 1970, was a science-fictionalized take on the infamous kangaroo

trial of the Chicago Seven for conspiracy to incite riot at the 1968 Democratic National Convention. ■ Panel from issue #89, May 1972; through Green Arrow, O'Neill voiced the counterculture's most noble concerns. ■ Compare the dialogue from Hal (Green Lantern) Jordan in this panel (issue #83, May 1971, inked by Dick Giordano), with this issue #10, Jan. 1962, written by John Broome: "No one in the world suspects that at a moment's notice I can become mighty Green Lantern — with my amazing power ring and invincible green beam! Golly, what a feeling it is!" ■ Detail from the splash page of "What Can One Man Do?", written by Elliot Maggin, issue #87.



INFANTINO

THOUGH HE HAD DRAWN FOR MANY COMIC BOOK PUBLISHERS SINCE HE WAS A TEENAGER IN THE 1940s -- THE GOLDEN AGE OF COMICS -- CARMINE INFANTINO'S STYLE MATURED AT DC COMICS BY THE MID-1950s TO MAKE HIM THE PREMIERE DC ARTIST OF THE SILVER AGE. HE EARNED THIS TITLE WITH HIS ABSOLUTELY MODERN DELINEATION OF THE FIRST TRUE SILVER AGE HERO, SUPER-SPEEDSTER THE FLASH IN 1956. HIS TWO-DIMENSIONAL DEPICTIONS OF SPEED AND MOTION -- AMONG MANY GRAPHIC INNOVATIONS INFANTINO DEVELOPED DURING HIS ELEVEN-YEAR RUN ON THE STRIP -- REMAIN BENCHMARKS IN THE MEDIUM.

SCIENCE FICTION LANDSCAPES AND MOTIFS RECEIVED INFANTINO'S SIGNATURE STYLIZATION IN HIS CONCURRENT, MEMORABLE RUN ON DC'S INTERPLANETARY HERO ADAM STRANGE. WITH HIS MORE DOWN-TO-EARTH BATMAN, WHOM HE REDESIGNED FOR THE 1960s (CLEARING THE RUNWAY FOR THE *RUNAWAY* SUCCESS OF THE 1966 TELEVISION SERIES), INFANTINO EARNED HIS PLACE IN THE PANTHEON OF DEFINITIVE BATMAN ARTISTS.

INFANTINO'S STRIKING AND SUCCESSFUL COVER DESIGNS FOR BATMAN AND A MYRIAD OF DC TITLES LED TO HIS BEING NAMED ART DIRECTOR IN 1967, THEN SUBSEQUENTLY EDITORIAL DIRECTOR, PUBLISHER AND FINALLY PRESIDENT OF DC COMICS, SETTING THE STYLE FOR THE COMPANY AND LEADING IT INTO ONE OF ITS MOST FERTILE, CREATIVE PERIODS EVER -- INFANTINO WAS THE FIRST ARTIST TO ATTAIN SUCH HEIGHTS IN THE HISTORY OF COMICS! THOUGH HE WAS THE FIRST ARTIST TO ATTAIN SUCH HEIGHTS IN THE HISTORY OF COMICS, IT CAME WITH A PRICE: THE DE FACTO LOSS OF INFANTINO THE COMIC BOOK ARTIST.

"THE ENIGMA OF MY ART IS IT NEVER FULLY MATURED," INFANTINO SAID IN HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY. "I STOPPED DRAWING IN FAVOR OF ATTAINING THE EXECUTIVE POSITIONS. MY ARTWORK IS AN UNFINISHED SYMPHONY, A PAINTING NEVER COMPLETED, A BABY NEVER RAISED. I'M NOT LAMENTING THE CREATIVE LOSS; NOBODY FORCED ME TO STOP DRAWING. WHAT DIRECTION MY UNFINISHED SYMPHONY MIGHT HAVE TAKEN REMAINS A MYSTERY."

"I HAD A FEELING SUPERHEROES WERE READY TO COME BACK!"

— Carmine Infantino

"**A**T THE TIME, 1954, '55, THE COMICS BUSINESS WAS DYING -- WE EVEN HAD TO TAKE A PAGE CUT! ALL THE COMPANIES WERE TRYING EVERYTHING SCIENCE FICTION, ROMANCE, WESTERN, AND I FIGURED I BETTER CREATE SOMETHING FOR MYSELF, JUST IN CASE I CAN SELL IT, AND GO OFF WITH IT.

Captain Marvel, by original artist and co-creator C.C. Beck, circa 1950. "I was a big fan of Captain Marvel," admitted Infantino. Aside from the character's similar name, the lightning insignia and some twin colors helped make him the visual antecedent to Captain Whiz—*a.k.a.* The Flash!

"SO I CREATED THIS CHARACTER, CAPTAIN WHIZ, AND THE COLORS OF EVIL -- HIS OWN GROUP OF VILLAINS EACH A DIFFERENT COLOR THEN. WHEN [DC COMICS WRITER] BOB KANISTER CAME UP WITH THE NEW FLASH IN 1956, HE CAME TO VISIT ME, AND SAID WHAT ABOUT USING SOME OF THAT STUFF YOU ALREADY DID? THESE WERE ALL THE CHARACTERS THAT EVENTUALLY BECAME THE FLASH, AND ALL HIS VILLAINS! CAPTAIN WHIZ'S COSTUME WAS ALMOST EXACTLY THE SAME!"



Captain Marvel, by original artist and co-creator C.C. Beck, circa 1950. "I was a big fan of Captain Marvel," admitted Infantino. Aside from the character's similar name, the lightning insignia and some twin colors helped make him the visual antecedent to Captain Whiz—*a.k.a.* The Flash!



"MOVEMENT -- THAT'S WHAT THE FLASH WAS ALL ABOUT, THAT'S WHAT MADE THE CHARACTER! HE WAS TOUGH TO DO BECAUSE OF THE CONSTANT SPEED! EVERY PAGE, I'D HAVE CONSTANT MOTION! EVEN WHEN IT WAS QUIET, YOU'LL NEED MOTION!"



"MANY YEARS AGO, THEY MADE A SHAPE LIKE A VEE, LIKE A WING, AND THEY FELT IT GAVE MOTION TO THEIR CAR DESIGNS. IT DIDN'T SELL, BUT I SAW IT AND SAID, 'BUT IT WORKS!' AND I USED IT!"

Pencil sketch from the double-page feature,

"How I Draw the Flash", #169, May 1967.

"AND IT HAD TO BE DRAWN DIFFERENTLY EACH TIME!"

"SOMETIMES I HAD A SINGLE FIGURE, OTHER TIMES MULTIPLE FIGURES."

"BECAUSE IT WAS SO BORING WITH JUST ONE SORT OF MOTION!"

#152, May 1965.

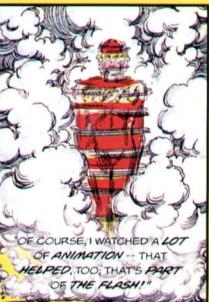
"I HAD A FEW DESIGNS, PLAYED WITH A COUPLE OF MASKS, SOME WITH HAIR SHOWING, BUT I DIDN'T LIKE THAT. I HAD SOME WITH VERY FANCY BOOTS, BUT THEY WEREN'T PRACTICAL. I WANTED TO KEEP THE COSTUME AS PRACTICAL AS POSSIBLE! I WENT WITH A LIGHTNING

ONLY MY SUPER-SPEED CAN GET ME OUT OF NUCLEAR BOMBS FROM HELL!"



#144, May 1964.

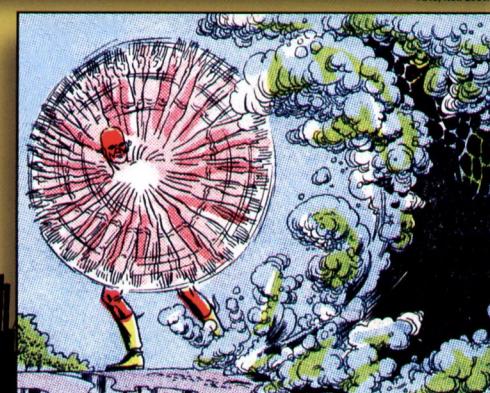
MOTIF, BECAUSE HE GOT HIS POWERS WHEN HE GOT HIT BY LIGHTNING! THAT'S THE WHOLE REASON FOR THE CHEST SYMBOL! IT'S ALL CONNECTED! IT'S ALL ORGANIC! THE LIGHTNING STRIPES WOULD HELP GIVE HIM SPEED WHEN HE RAN EVEN THE LITTLE WINGS WOULD HELP GIVE HIM SPEED -- LIKE LIGHTNING STRIKES!"



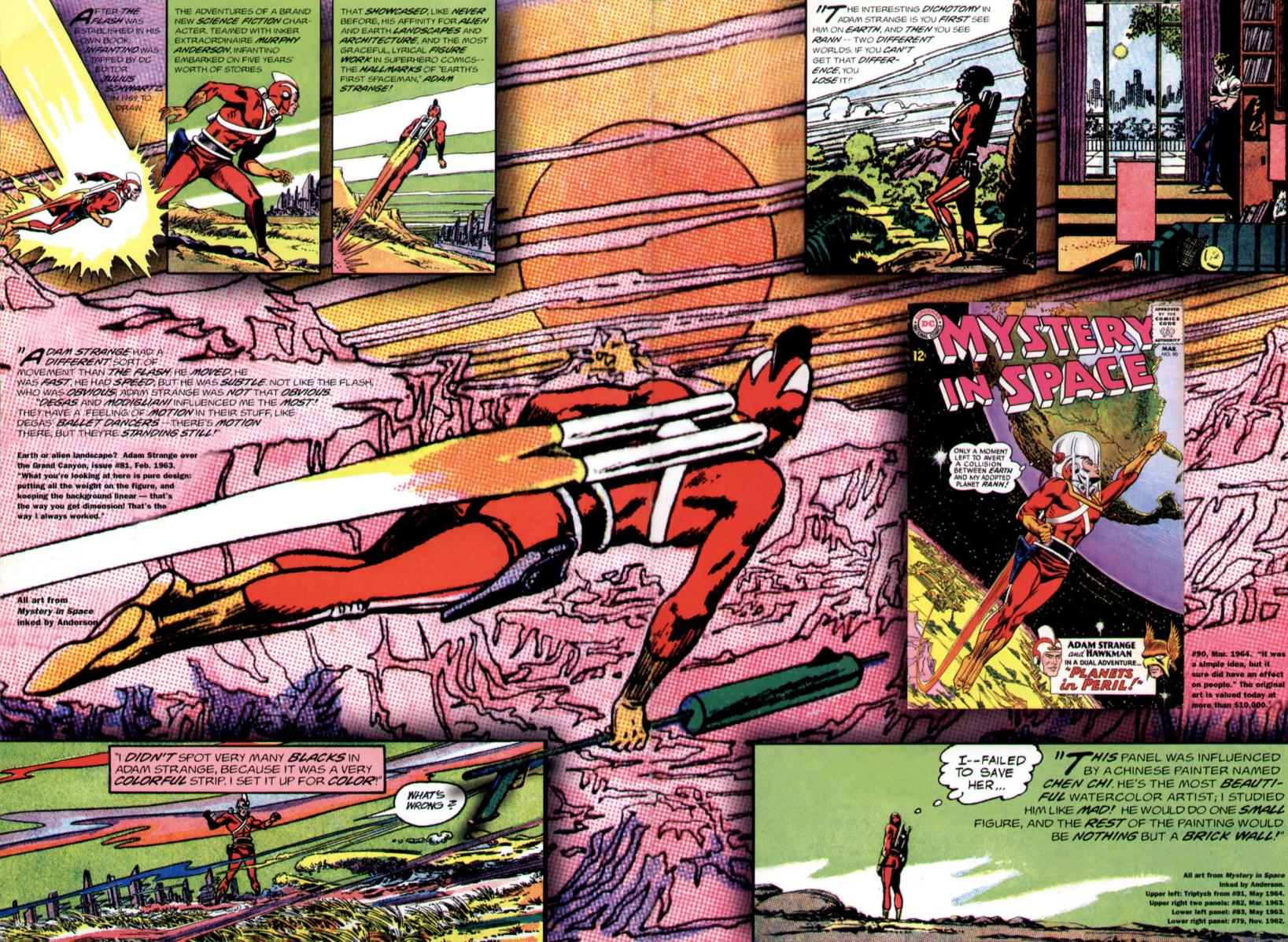
#150, Feb. 1965.

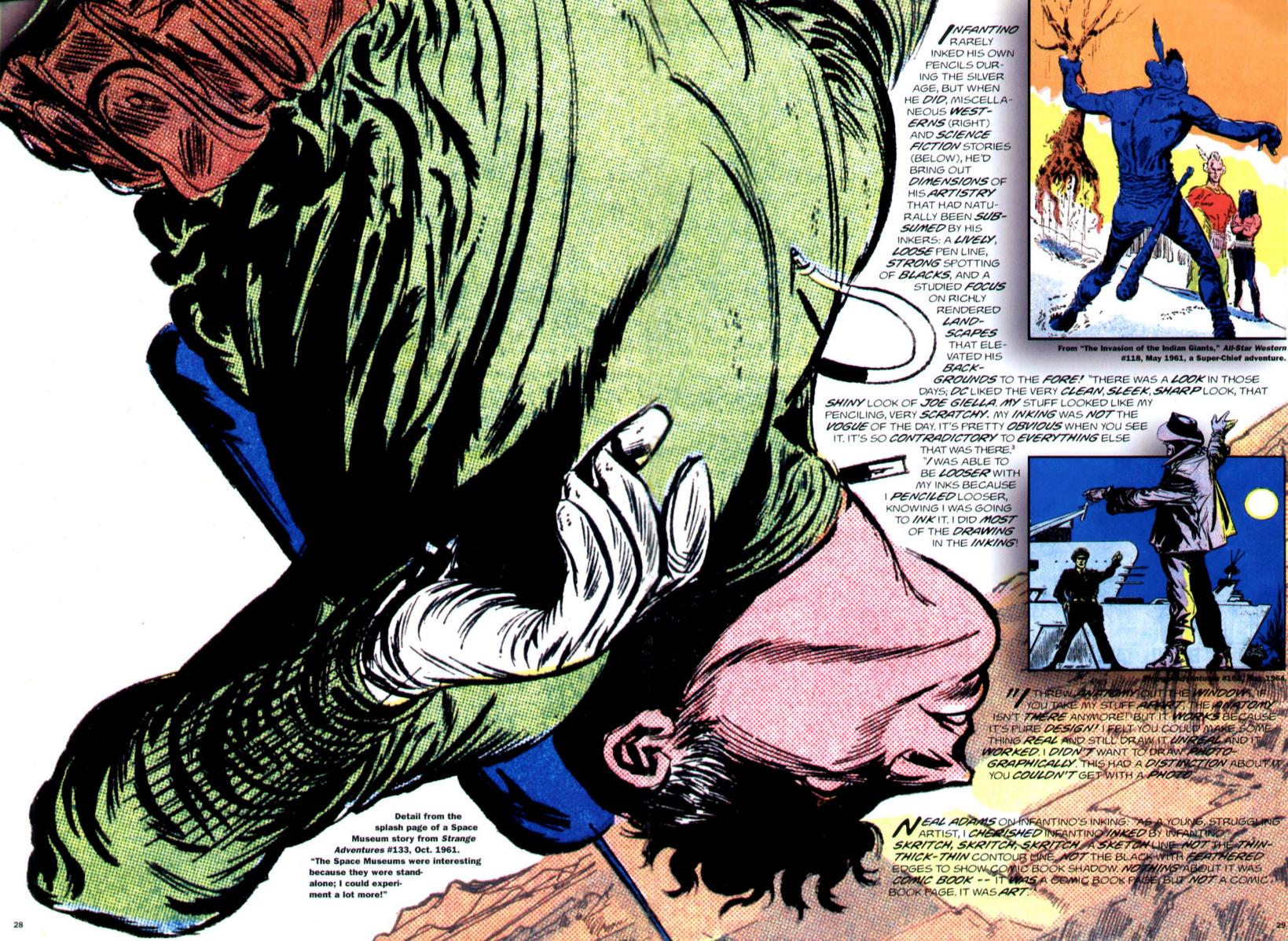


#248, Nov. 1964.



#119, Mar. 1961.





Detail from the
splash page of a Space
Museum story from *Strange
Adventures* #133, Oct. 1961.

"The Space Museums were interesting
because they were stand-
alone; I could experi-
ment a lot more!"

INFANTINO
RARELY
INKED HIS OWN
PENCILS DURING THE SILVER
AGE, BUT WHEN
HE DID, MISCELLANEOUS WEST-
ERNs (RIGHT)
AND SCIENCE
FICTION STORIES
(BELOW), HE'D
BRING OUT
DIMENSIONS OF
HIS ARTISTRY
THAT HAD NATU-
RALLY BEEN SUB-
SUMED BY HIS
INKERS. A LIVELY,
LOOSE PEN LINE,
STRONG SPOTTING
OF BLACKS, AND A
STUDIED FOCUS
ON RICHLY
RENDERED
LAND-
SCAPES
THAT ELE-
VATED HIS
BACK-
GROUNDS TO THE FORE! THERE WAS A LOOK IN THOSE
DAYS, DC LIKED THE VERY CLEAN, SLEEK, SHARP LOOK, THAT

SHINY LOOK OF JOE GIELLA. MY STUFF LOOKED LIKE MY
PENCILING, VERY SCRATCHY. MY INKING WAS NOT THE
VOGUE OF THE DAY. IT'S PRETTY OBVIOUS WHEN YOU SEE
IT. IT'S SO CONTRADICTORY TO EVERYTHING ELSE

THAT WAS THERE?
I WAS ABLE TO
BE LOOSER WITH
MY INKS BECAUSE
I PENCILED LOOSER,
KNOWING I WAS GOING
TO INK IT. I DID MOST
OF THE DRAWING
IN THE INKING!



...I THREW ANATOMY OUT THE WINDOW. IF
YOU TAKE MY STUFF APART, THE ANATOMY
ISN'T THERE ANYMORE! BUT IT WORKS BECAUSE
IT'S PURE DESIGN! I FELT YOU COULD MAKE SOME
THING REAL AND STILL DRAW IT UNREAL AND IT
WORKED. I DIDN'T WANT TO DRAW PHOTO-
GRAPHICALLY. THIS HAD A DISTINCTION ABOUT IT
YOU COULDN'T GET WITH A PHOTO.

NEAL ADAMS ON INFANTINO'S INKING: "AS A YOUNG, STRUGGLING
ARTIST, I CHERISHED INFANTINO INKED BY INFANTINO
SKRITCH, SKRITCH, SKRATCH. A SKETCH LINE, NOT THE THIN-
THICK-THIN CONTOUR LINE, NOT THE BLACK WITH FEATHERED
EDGES TO SHOW COMIC BOOK SHADOW. NOTHING ABOUT IT WAS
COMIC BOOK -- IT WAS A COMIC BOOK PAGE, BUT NOT A COMIC
BOOK PAGE, IT WAS ART."

From "The Invasion of the Indian Giants," *All-Star Western*
#118, May 1961, a Super-Chief adventure.

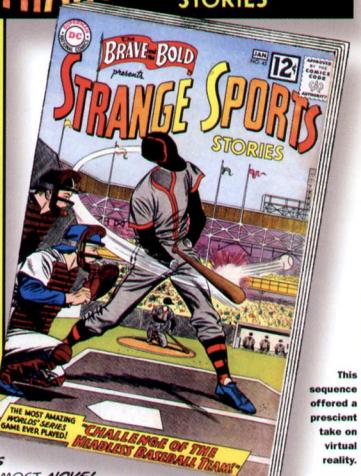
Here is Your FORMULA for a NEW THRILL in Comic Book Reading!

SCIENCE-FICTION plus SPORTS STORIES
equals
STRANGE SPORTS
STORIES

THANKS TO A
NEW TECHNIQUE
IN COMIC BOOK ILLUSTRATION,
YOU CAN FLIP THE PAGES OF
THIS MAGAZINE AND SEE A
BASEBALL GAME--A FOOT-
BALL GAME--PLAYED BEFORE
YOUR VERY EYES!

AND WHAT A BASEBALL
GAME--A "WORLDS" SERIES
MATCH BETWEEN THE
BASEBALL CHAMPIONS OF
EARTH AND A HEADLESS
BASEBALL TEAM FROM
ANOTHER WORLD!

AND WHAT A FOOTBALL
GAME--STARRING THE
GREATEST PIGSKIN HERO
OF ALL TIME--
"GOLIATH OF THE
GRIDIRON!"



This sequence offered a prescient take on virtual reality.

BUT STRANGELY ENOUGH, ARTHUR STACY IS NOT PARTICIPATING PERSONALLY IN THESE SPORTING ACTIVITIES! AS A MATTER OF FACT...



...HE IS IN TERRA CITY, SITTING IN HIS FAVORITE ARM-CHAIR-- HIS PASSPORT TO SPORT! FOR THIS IS THE 30TH CENTURY...



I'VE BLASTED A METEOROID WITH EVERY SHOT I'VE TAKEN--AND THAT SWARM IS SPEEDING THROUGH SPACE AT 30 MILES A SECOND!



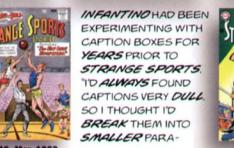
IT WAS ASA KETVIN, THEN WHO REALLY STARTED THE SO-CALLED "DOWNFALL" OF SPORTS...



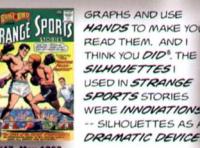
THANKS TO MY INVENTION, MANKIND WILL BEGIN A NEW ERA! WHATEVER SPORT A MAN WANTS TO INDULGE IN--HE WILL BE ABLE TO DO SO WITHOUT LEAVING HIS COMFORTABLE HOME!

"*Strange Sports Stories* was the most novel book I ever did," Infantino said. "It was different. When Schwartz gave me this book to do, all he said was, 'I want it to look different.' Look different it did, primarily due to Infantino's bold

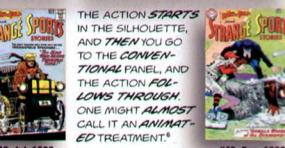
use of silhouetted caption boxes, a feature played up by DC in their house ad (above) for the debut issue, *Brave & Bold* #45, Jan. 1963, inked by Murphy Anderson.



INFANTINO HAD BEEN EXPERIMENTING WITH CAPTION BOXES FOR YEARS PRIOR TO *STRANGE SPORTS*. HE ALWAYS FOUND CAPTIONS VERY DULL, SO HE THOUGHT HE'D BREAK THEM INTO SMALLER PARAGRAPHS.



GRAPHS AND USE HANDS TO MAKE YOU READ THEM, AND I THINK YOU DID. THE SILHOUETTES I USED IN *STRANGE SPORTS* STORIES WERE INNOVATIONS--SILHOUETTES AS A DRAMATIC DEVICE



THE ACTION STARTS IN THE SILHOUETTE, AND THEN YOU GO TO THE CONVENTIONAL PANEL, AND THE ACTION FOLLOWS THROUGH. ONE MIGHT ALMOST CALL IT AN ANIMATED TREATMENT.*



946, Mar. 1963.

947, May 1963.

948, Jul. 1963.

949, Sep. 1963.



"NOBODY HAD EVER DONE THAT BEFORE. I ONLY USED THEM FOR ONE REASON BECAUSE IT CREATED MORE ACTION, YOU GOT A KIND OF FEELING OF RHYTHM, OF MOVEMENT!"



946, Mar. 1963.

947, May 1963.

948, Jul. 1963.

949, Sep. 1963.

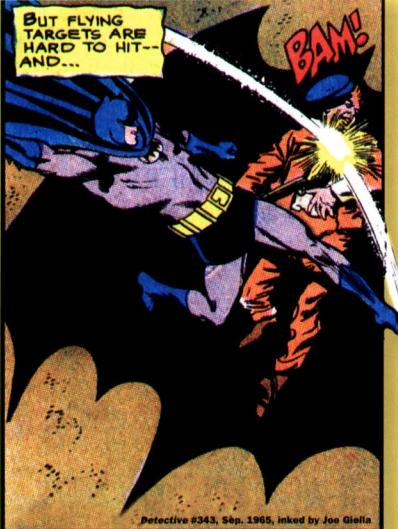
DO IT!

IT'S BLOWING UP!

"THE SCIENCE FICTION HAS ALL IMAGINATION. I WOULD TRY TO CREATE WHAT I THOUGHT THE FUTURE WOULD LOOK LIKE. NEVER STROVE FOR PERFECTION. STORYTELLING AND DESIGN WERE PARAMOUNT WITH ME."



All art from "Saga of the Secret Supermen," *Brave & Bold* #47, May 1963, written by Gardner Fox, inked by Anderson.



Detective #343, Sep. 1966, inked by Joe Giella

WHEN A DECADE LONG DECLINE IN SALES OF THEIR FRANCHISE CHARACTER LED DC'S PUBLISHER IRWIN DONENFELD TO OFFER INNANTINO THE JOB TO DRAW BATMAN IN 1964, IT WAS BECAUSE, ACCORDING TO THE ARTIST, 'DC WAS GOING TO CANCEL BATMAN.' DONENFELD SAID TO US, 'I'M GONNA GIVE YOU GUYS A SHOT, AND IF IT DOESN'T WORK, IT'S ALL OVER.'



Detective #343

What's NEW?

The "NEW LOOK" in
BATMAN and
DETECTIVE
COMICS!

STORIES...

INITIATING A THRILLING SERIES
OF POWER-PACKED ADVENTURES
STARRING THE WORLD'S GREATEST
DETECTIVE TEAM...

BATMAN and ROBIN!

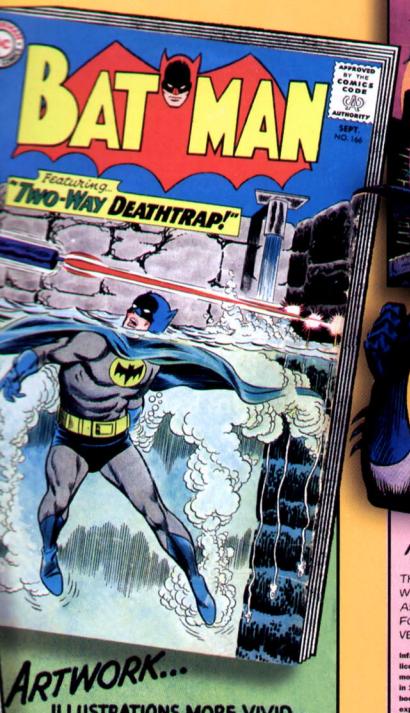


Introducing a "New Look" BATMAN and ROBIN in *MYSTERY of the MURKING MASKS!*

12¢ APPROVED BY THE
COMIC BOOK CENSORSHIP
COUNCIL FOR
ADULTORITY
MAY NO. 327



STARTING IN THIS ISSUE... THE ELONGATED MAN!

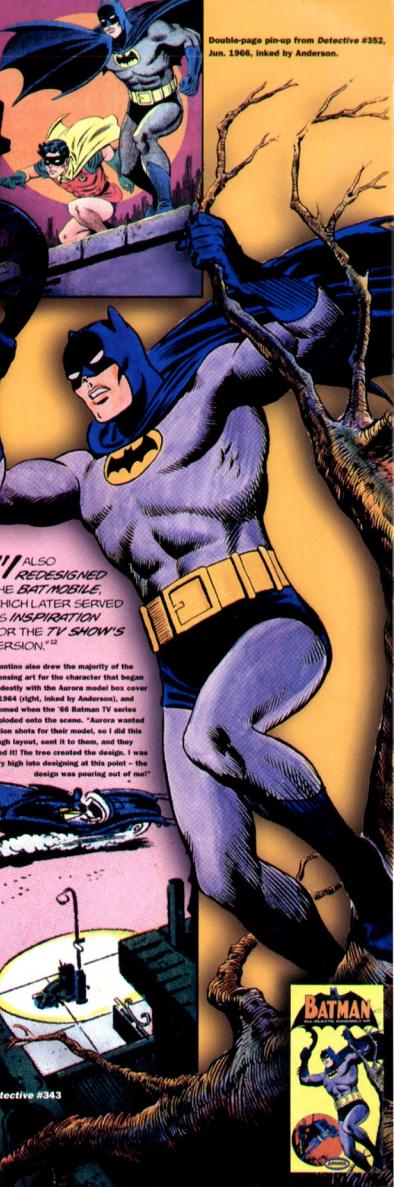


ARTWORK...

ILLUSTRATIONS MORE VIVID,
COLORFUL, REALISTIC
THAN EVER BEFORE!

What was also new about "The New Look" was, for the first time in comic book history, the quality of the artwork was emphasized as a selling point, as shown in this altered version of DC's house ad featuring two of the earliest *Infantino Batman* covers, Detective Comics #327, May 1964, and Detective #343, Sep. 1966, both inked by Giella.

WITH JULIE SCHWARTZ AS EDITOR, I STARTED ON BATMAN. JULIE SAID TO YOU BETTER COME UP WITH SOME COVER IDEAS. WE NEED SOMETHING DIFFERENT. SO THE FIRST ONE (LEFT) WAS DIFFERENT, WITH A THREE-PANEL LAYOUT, AND PEOPLE LIKED IT.¹⁹ JULIE SUGGESTED I MAKE SOME CHANGES TO BATMAN'S COSTUME AS PART OF OUR CHARACTER UPDATE. THIS INCLUDED CHANGES TO THE EARS AND THE NOSE OF BATMAN'S COWL, AS WELL AS ADDING THE YELLOW CIRCLE AROUND THE INSIGNIA ON BATMAN'S CHEST. WE DEVELOPED WHAT WAS CALLED "THE NEW LOOK,"²⁰ AND THE NUMBERS STARTED TO MOVE UP. BATMAN WAS COMING BACK....²¹



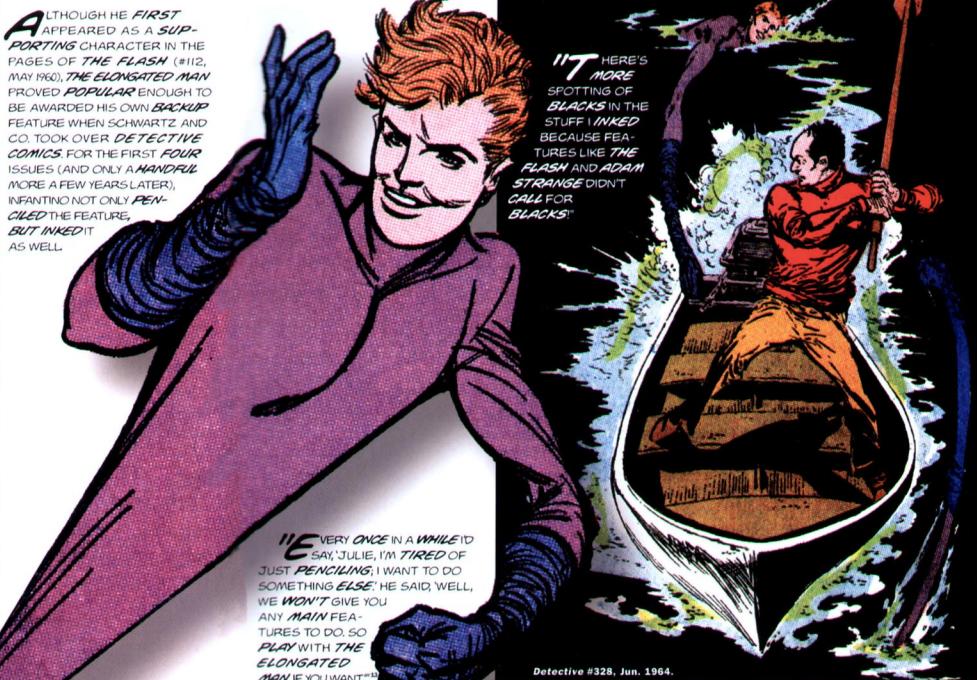
Detective #343

Double-page pin-up from Detective #352, Jun. 1966, inked by Anderson.





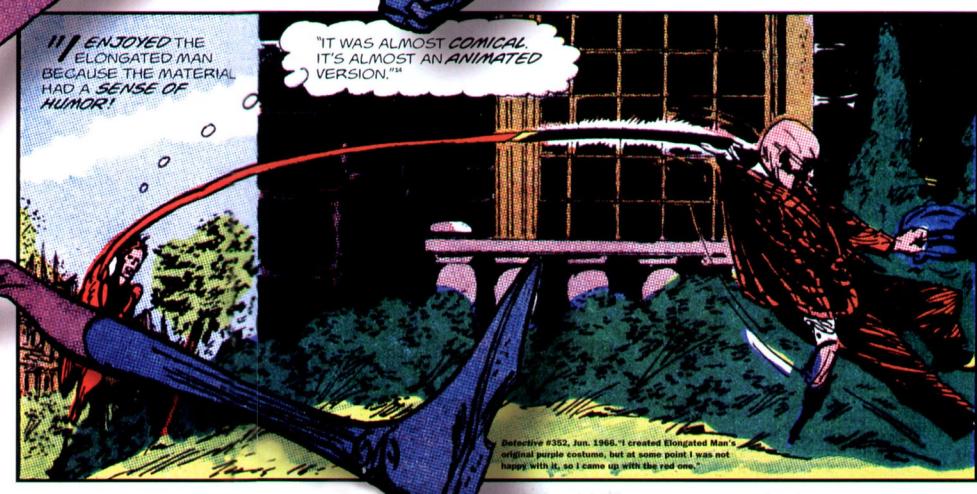
Detective #327, May 1964.



Detective #328, Jun. 1964.

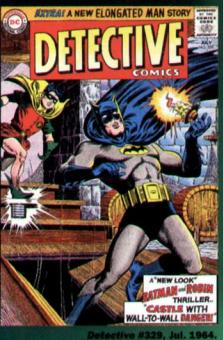


Center figure: Detective #327

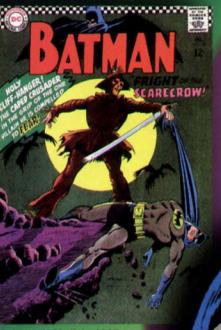


Detective #352, Jun. 1966. "I created Elongated Man's original purple costume, but at some point I was not happy with it, so I came up with the red one."

Detective #355, Sep. 1966.



Detective #329, Jul. 1964.



Batman #189, Feb. 1967.

"I TREATED BATMAN FAR DIFFERENTLY THAN I TREATED THE FLASH. WITH BATMAN, I WENT FOR MOOD; WITH THE FLASH, I DIDN'T. THE FLASHES WERE OPEN, ZIPPIER, A LITTLE MORE HUMOROUS. BATMAN WAS DARK AND MOODY. MAYBE THAT'S WHY I DIDN'T CARE FOR BATMAN THAT MUCH, BECAUSE IT LEANED TOWARD THE GOTHIC, AND I WASN'T A FAN OF GOTHIC."



"I WAS AIMING FOR VERY DIFFERENT COVERS FOR BATMAN -- I TOOK STANDARD THINGS, LIKE THE JOKER'S HEAD (THE HOUSE THE JOKER BUILT WAS MY FAVORITE COVER), AND PUSHED THE LIMITS."



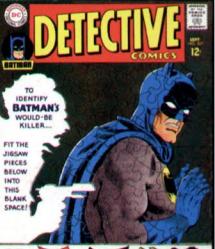
Detective #352, Jun. 1966.



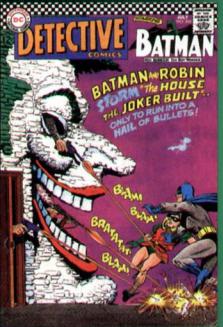
Batman #181, Jun. 1966.

"ON COVERS, I FELT THAT IF YOU IRRITATE THE EYE, YOU DRAW THEM [THE READERS] IN, AND PERHAPS [THEYLL] BUY THE COMIC, AS COMICS ARE AN IMPULSE BUY. ONE WAY TO IRRITATE THE EYE IS BY CREATING NEGATIVE SPACE WITH SHAPES; YOU CAN PUT THINGS OFF-ANGLE OR YOU CAN PUT A LARGE OBJECT IN WITH A TINY OBJECT, AND THAT WOULD FORCE THE EYE TO LOOK, AND IT WOULD OFFEND IT; IT IRRITATES A BIT, BUT IT TAKES YOU IN... ONCE YOU GET THE PERSON IN, YOU HOLD THEM."

"THEN IT'S THE ARTIST'S JOB: MY COMPOSITION, MY MOVING THE PICTURE AROUND; AND MY MOVING THE CAMERA AROUND, TO HOLD THEM."



Detective #367, Sep. 1967.



Detective #366, Jul. 1967.



Batman #181, Jun. 1967.



Double-page pin-up, Batman #181, Jun. 1966.



"It was done for licensing originally, then they used it for a pin-up."



"An example of this on a Batman cover was breaking the lettering of the word 'Batman' into millions of pieces as he was coming down." When Donenfeld saw this cover (Batman #194, Aug. 1967), he had a fit! He was worried about what the distributors were going to do in those cases. They used to rip the logo off the tops of comic books and send 'em back for credit. He said, 'I don't see the logo on top!' I said, 'You don't have to — you've got Batman up there!'



"Then there was the Flash cover (#174, Nov. 1967) where I took the lettering, and made it very long with all the villains set across the top, and the Flash lying on the bottom as if he were dead..." When the distributors saw these two covers, they didn't want to put these books out... but I stuck to my guns, and they went with them. They had about 98% sales on those two books. Those are examples of slackers. They got you, and you remembered them."

THE DEBUT OF DEADMAN, INFANTINO'S FINAL SILVER AGE LEGACY, ONE OF THE LAST STORIES HE ILLUSTRATED BEFORE BECOMING AN EXECUTIVE AT DC COMICS.

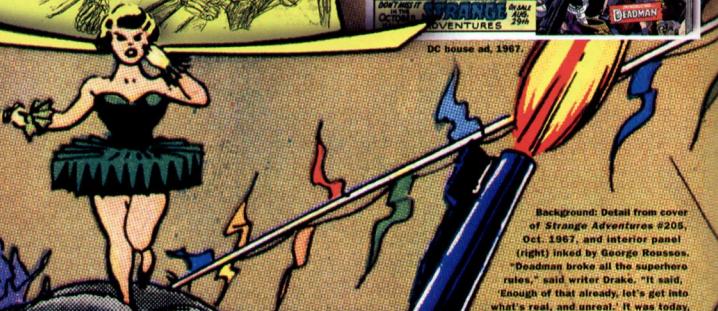
"I REMEMBER THE OPENING SHOT WHERE HE DIES. THAT COVER WAS (DC WRITER/CREATOR) ARNOLD DRAKE'S IDEA WHERE IT SAYS, THIS MAN HAS JUST BEEN KILLED AND HIS STORY IS JUST BEGINNING. HE THREW IT AT ME AND I DID IT, AND IT WORKED. IT'S VERY GOOD. THAT COVER, REALLY INTERESTING. DEADMAN WAS A GOOD CHARACTER."



"DRAKE HAD DONE A SKETCH (RIGHT) WITH A FACE THAT WAS MORE SKULL-LIKE, BUT I SAID IT WASN'T GOOD. PEOPLE WEREN'T GOING TO RELATE TO A SKULL, SO I GAVE HIM MORE OF A MASK, SO HE COULD SHOW EMOTION, YOU COULDN'T GET EMOTION THE OTHER WAY."



Background: Detail from cover of Strange Adventures #205, Oct. 1967, and interior panel (right) inked by George Roussos. "Deadman broke all the superhero rules," said writer Drake. "It said, 'Enough of that already, let's get into what's real, and unreal.' It was today, Eastern philosophies, and so on. I was listening, and I was hearing."





Steve Ditko

PRIOR TO HIS CO-CREATION OF *SPIDER-MAN* WITH MARVEL COMICS' WRITER/EDITOR STAN LEE IN 1962, STEVE DITKO'S ARTISTIC MILIEU MIRRORED THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL, UGLINESS AND BEAUTY, AGE AND YOUTH, THE WEAK VERSUS THE STRONG. THUS, HIS GROUNDBREAKING DEPICTION OF *SPIDER-MAN* WENT AGAINST TYPE BY PORTRAYING THE EVERYMAN, THE LONER, THE UNDERDOG -- IE., THE TEENAGER -- AS SUPERHERO, AND HENCE SUPER-ANTIHERO, THE SILVER AGE'S MOST POPULAR. YET, SOMEWHAT PARADOXICALLY, DITKO MADE *SPIDER-MAN* A TOUR-DE-FORCE OF THE SUPERHERO GENRE ITSELF, FEATURING CREATIVELY CHOREOGRAPHED FIGHT SCENES AND ACROBATIC DERRING-DO THAT TOOK FULL ADVANTAGE OF THE TRAITS INHERENT IN THE HERO'S ARACHNID NAMESAKE.

WITH HIS CREATION OF THE SUPER-SORCERER *DR. STRANGE*, DITKO EXPLORED THE DARKER WORLDS OF MYSTICISM AND THE OCCULT, TO A GENERATION WEANED ON AMERICAN POP CULTURE'S MORE MUNDANE DEPICTIONS OF REALITY, A STEP INTO THE PAGES OF *DR. STRANGE* IN 1963 PROVED TO BE A SURREALISTIC JOURNEY THROUGH THE WONDROUS WORLDS OF DITKO'S ARTISTIC IMAGINATION IN WHICH FORM WAS GIVEN TO BIZARRE DIMENSIONS AND ALTERNATE REALITIES THAT CAN BE SEEN AS PRECURSORS TO THE PSYCHEDELIA OF THE LATER 1960S.

AFTER DITKO LEFT MARVEL IN 1966, HE CREATED *THE CREEPER* AND *THE HAWK* AND *THE DOVE* FOR DC COMICS -- THAT, IF NOT ON THE SAME LEVEL OF POPULARITY AS HIS PREVIOUS MARVEL HEROES, HAVE NEVERTHELESS ENDURED TO ENTERTAIN NEW GENERATIONS, AS HAVE HIS ICONOCLASTIC, ENIGMATIC TWIN HEROES, *MR. A* AND *THE QUESTION*, WHO REMAIN AS CONTROVERSIAL IN CONCEPT TODAY AS THEY WERE WHEN DITKO FIRST CREATED THEM.

THE INFLUENCE AND UBIDIQUITY OF DITKO'S SILVER AGE WORK STAND IN STARK CONTRAST TO DITKO'S PERSONAL WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PUBLIC EVENTS, PHOTOGRAPHS AND INTERVIEWS BEFITTING A CREATOR OF HIS STATURE. "I'M A CARTOONIST IN THE COMIC BOOK BUSINESS," DITKO SAID IN 1968, "NOT A PERFORMER OR PERSONALITY IN SHOW BUSINESS. WHEN I DO A JOB, IT'S NOT MY PERSONALITY THAT I'M OFFERING THE READERS, BUT MY ART WORK. IT'S NOT WHAT I'M LIKE THAT COUNTS, BUT WHAT I DID AND HOW WELL IT WAS DONE. I PRODUCE A PRODUCT, A COMIC ART STORY. STEVE DITKO IS THE BRAND NAME."

Amazing ADULT Fantasy

...WAS AN *ATLAS* (NEE *TIMEY*, LATER *MARVEL*) COMICS ANTHOLOGY TITLE (1960-62) OF BRIEF SCIENCE FICTION/HORROR/FANTASY STORIES WRITTEN BY LEE AND ILLUSTRATED BY DITKO THAT WAS SUB-TITLED 'THE MAGAZINE THAT RESPECTS YOUR INTELLIGENCE' BECAUSE ITS "FANTASTIC THRILLERS" AS THE COVER BLURBS READ WERE "FOR THE MORE MATURE READER."

IN THESE STORIES LAY THE *SEEDS* OF DITKO'S MARVEL MASTERWORKS, SPIDER-MAN AND DOCTOR STRANGE. FOR BOTH WERE SUPER-HERO STORIES WITH A *TWILIGHT ZONE* BENT. THE SAGAS OF AN AMERICAN *BOY* *SPIDER* WHO TURNED *SPIDER* *MAN* AND A *TEENAGER* WITH SUPER POWERS WHO FAILS TO USE THEM WHEN NEEDED. *MOST* WERE *TRULY AMAZING* ADULT FANTASIES, AND, AS RENDERED BY DITKO, AS FAR AWAY FROM THE SICK, *NERVOUS* MODELS OF THE DC ARTISTS AS FROM MARVEL DYNAMO JACK KIRBY.

THE MAN WHO CAPTURED DEATH!



Above: Amazing Adult Fantasy #9, Feb. 1962.



Above: Charlton Comics' Space Adventures #27, Dec. 1960, featuring Ditko's Captain Atom — not just the first superhero of the Silver Age to not be based on a 1940s model — but a prime factor in Lee's trusting Ditko with a superhero.



Left: Post-Humous Justice, Wayne, from Batman #1, Spring 1940, by Bob Kane and Bill Finger. The influence of Batman's origin on the primal gull of Spideymania: Parker's authentic gull over his uncle's death was a literarization of Batman's subconscious gull over his parents' deaths.

Background images, clockwise from lower left:
Journey into Mystery #96, Sep. 1963.
Amazing Adult Fantasy #1, Dec. 1962.
Strange Tales #115, Dec. 1963.
Amazing Fantasy #15, Aug. 1962.

"STEVE'S STYLE WAS ALMOST DIAMETRICALLY DIFFERENT FROM JACK'S. RECALLED LEE, WHERE JACK WOULD *NEVER* DRAW, STEVE WOULD STRIVE *ZEALOUSLY* FOR TOTAL *REALISM*, WHERE JACK MADE HIS CHARACTERS AS HEROICALLY HANDSOME AS POSSIBLE, STEVE'S FORTÉ SEEMED TO BE DEPICTING THE *AVERAGE* MAN IN THE STREET. I DECIDED TO PLAY A *HUNCH*. I ASKED STEVE TO DRAW SPIDER-MAN AND THE REST IS HISTORY."

Above: Everett Sloane, *The Twilight Zone*, 1959.

Below: Richard Conte, *The Twilight Zone*, 1959.



THEY READ LIKE COMIC BOOK VERSIONS OF ROD SERLING'S TELEVISION CLASSIC, *THE TWILIGHT ZONE* (CBS-TV, 1959-64), BECAUSE THEY WERE SIMILARLY POPULATED WITH *AVERAGE*, *ORDINARY* PEOPLE WHO FOUND THEMSELVES IN *EXTRAORDINARY* SITUATIONS THAT WOULD RESOLVE IN SURPRISE, *TWIST ENDINGS*. EVEN DITKO'S VISUAL CHARACTERIZATIONS PERFECTLY ECHOED THEIR VIDEO COUNTERPARTS.



ACCORDING TO DITKO, "NO ONE MIND AND HAND CREATED THE MARVEL-PUBLISHED SPIDER-MAN 'CREATION.' STAN LEE THOUGHT THE NAME UP, DID THE COSTUME, WEB GIMMICK ON WRIST, AND SPIDER-SIGNAL."¹⁴



LEE SEEMED TO CONCUR, "I HAVE ALWAYS CONSIDERED STEVE DITKO TO BE SPIDER-MAN'S CO-CREATOR... FROM HIS VERY FIRST PANEL, STEVE CREATED AND ESTABLISHED THE PERFECT MOOD AND GESTALT FOR SPIDER-MAN. ALSO, IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT STEVE'S COSTUME DESIGN WAS AN ACTUAL MASTERPIECE OF IMAGINATION. THANKS TO STEVE DITKO, SPIDEY'S COSTUME HAS BECOME ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST RECOGNIZABLE VISUAL ICONS."¹⁵

Background: From "How Stan Lee and Steve Ditko create Spider-Man," *Spider-Man Annual #1*, 1964.

Right: Ditko's idea, the Marvel character logo box, first seen on Spider-Man #2, May 1963; in issue #3, it ran on the letters column with the blurb, "Don't forget to look for one of the greatest trademarks in comics..."



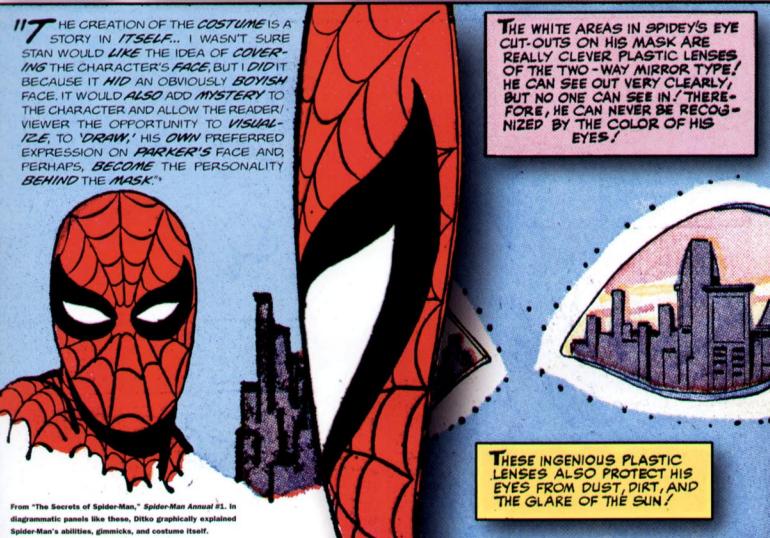
Above: Amazing Fantasy #15, Aug. 1962.

Above: Spider-Man #3, Jul. 1963.

Above: Spider-Man #3.

"THE CREATION OF THE COSTUME IS A STORY IN ITSELF... I WASN'T SURE STAN WOULD LIKE THE IDEA OF COVERING THE CHARACTER'S FACE, BUT I DID IT BECAUSE IT HAD AN OBVIOUSLY BOYISH FACE, IT WOULD ALSO ADD MYSTERY TO THE CHARACTER AND ALLOW THE READER/VIEWER THE OPPORTUNITY TO VISUALIZE, TO 'DRAW,' HIS OWN PREFERRED EXPRESSION ON PARKER'S FACE AND, PERHAPS, BECOME THE PERSONALITY BEHIND THE MASK."¹⁶

THE WHITE AREAS IN SPIDEY'S EYE CUT-OUTS ON HIS MASK ARE REALLY CLEVER PLASTIC LENSES OF THE TWO-WAY MIRROR TYPE! HE CAN SEE OUT VERY CLEARLY, BUT NO ONE CAN SEE IN! THEREFORE, HE CAN NEVER BE RECOGNIZED BY THE COLOR OF HIS EYES!



From "The Secrets of Spider-Man," Spider-Man Annual #1. In diagrammatic panels like these, Ditko graphically explained Spider-Man's abilities, gimmicks, and costume itself.

Below: Spider-Man #2, May 1963.



Below: Spider-Man #3.



WANTED

CAUTION:
HE IS
DANGER-
OUS



REPORT
HIM TO
NEAREST
F.B.I.
OFFICE

SPIDERMAN REWARD FOR HIS CAPTURE

FROM THE START, THE SPIDER-LIKE ASPECTS OF DITKO'S CONCEPTION WERE SO FULLY REALIZED THAT THEY MAKE SPIDER-MAN AS MUCH A VESTIGE OF THE MONSTERS FROM MARVEL'S PRE-HERO ERA AS A NEW SUPER-HERO -- WHICH FRIGHTENED

NOT ONLY THE FICTIONAL CITY FOLK BUT REAL COMIC BOOK FOLK. AS DITKO EXPLAINED, "THERE IS SOMETHING I DID THAT THREATENED SPIDER-MAN... STAN WANTED ME TO TAKE SPIDER-MAN OFF THE WIRE, CEILING... TO CHANGE THE SPIDER-LIKE POSES.

"STAN WAS AFRAID THE COMICS CODE 'JUDGES' MIGHT OR WOULD REJECT SPIDER-MAN BECAUSE PETER PARKER, THE TEENAGER, WOULD BE SEEN BY YOUNG BUYERS AS SOMETHING NON-HUMAN, A FREAK, A SPIDER-LIKE CREATURE. SEEING THE SPIDER-LIKE POSES WOULD BE BAD, CAUSING ALL KINDS OF MENTAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS..."

"DOES ANYONE CARE TO SPECULATE ON WHAT AN UN-SPIDER-LIKE CHARACTER SPIDER-MAN WOULD HAVE BEEN AND LOOKED LIKE IN ACTION?"

NOTE: SPIDER-MAN FIRST APPEARED AS A FEATURE IN AMAZING FANTASY #14, AND OVER THE YEARS, MARVEL HAS POSTCARDS OF IT WAS DESIGNED TO GIVE HIM HIS MAGAZINE A BRIEF SPIDERMAN COLORING

FREAK!
PUBLIC
MENACE!

SURE, YOU'VE READ MANY STORIES ABOUT MANY DIFFERENT MAGAZINE HEROES! A STORY LIKE THIS ONE-- BECAUSE THERE'S NEVER BEEN A HERO LIKE... SPIDERMAN!

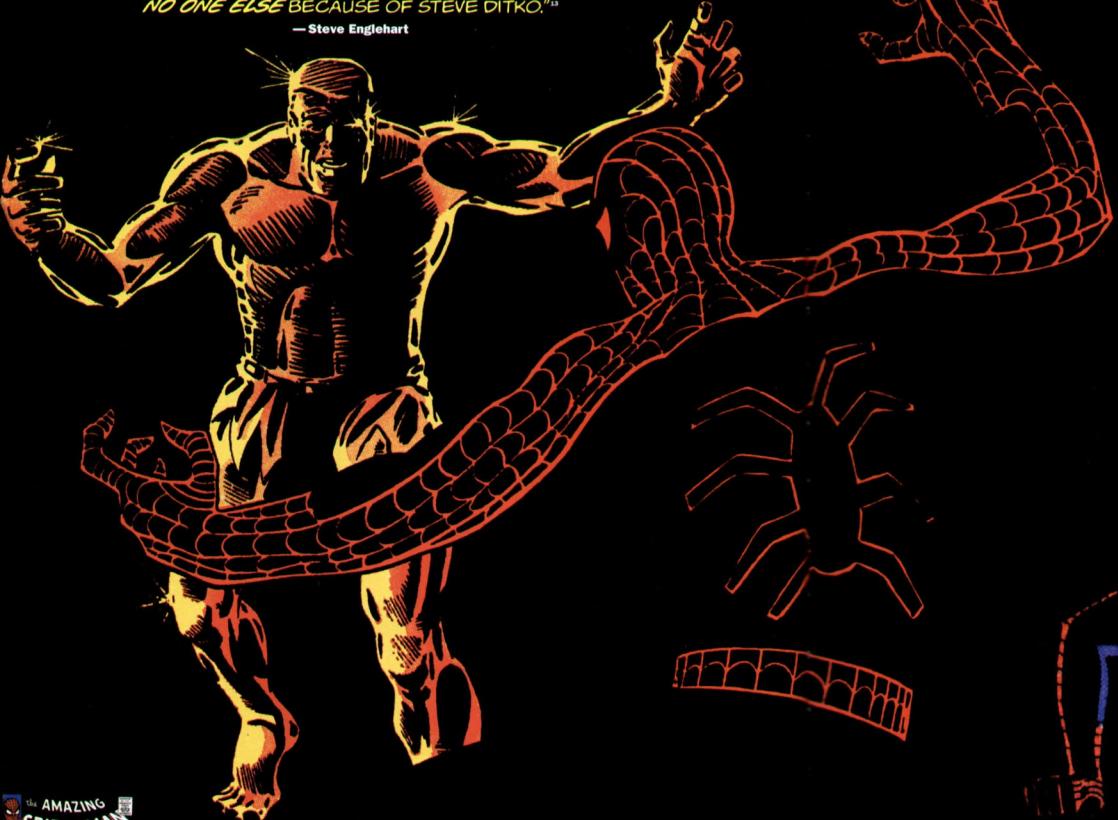
NOW ANYBODY WITH THE INTELLIGENCE OF A SEVEN YEAR OLD KNOWS THAT IF A MAN ACTED SPIDER-LIKE, WHO SEEMED TO BE MORE SPIDER THAN HUMAN, HE'D GET AN OVERNIGHT SENSATION! ESPECIALLY WHEN HIS FEATS WERE PERFORMED WITHOUT THE HELP OF TRICK PHOTOGRAPHY! WELL, YOU CAN JUST IMAGINE HOW THE PUBLIC REACTED TO SPIDERMAN!

I'M SEEIN' IT
WITH MY OWN
EYES, AND I
STILL DON'T
BELIEVE IT!

MARVEL AND DC WRITER STEVE ENGLEHART ASKED, "WHAT WOULD THE WORLD'S MOST POPULAR SUPERHERO, SPIDER-MAN, BE WITHOUT DITKO?"

"THE THIRTY-NINE ISSUES AND TWO ANNUALS STEVE DREW HAD THE ESSENCE OF STRANGENESS, OF DARKNESS, THAT NOT EVEN THE MASSIVE SUCCESS AND CONSEQUENT LOSS OF A SINGLE GUIDING SPIRIT COULD OBLITERATE. SPIDEY IS SPIDEY AND NO ONE ELSE BECAUSE OF STEVE DITKO."¹³

— Steve Englehart

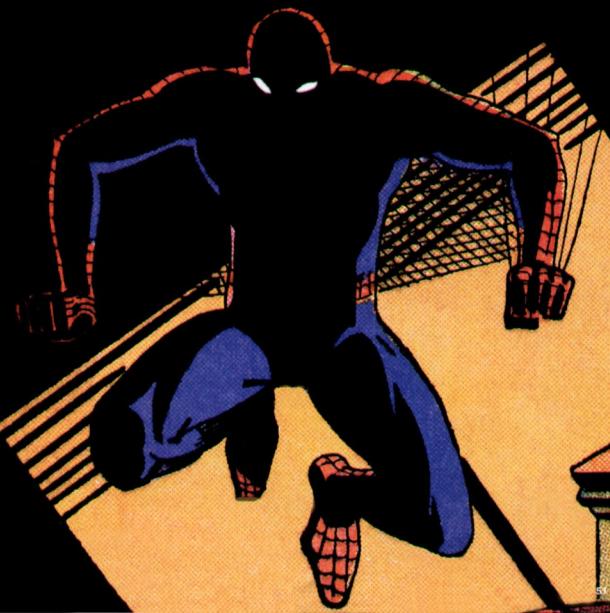


Background and cover above:
Spider-Man #25, Sep. 1968.
Right page top to bottom:
Spider-Man #2, May 1963.
Spider-Man #5, Oct. 1963.
Spider-Man #35, Apr. 1966.

STRANGENESS AND DARKNESS MEET IN DITKO'S SPIDER-SENSE DESIGN.

"**A**T SOME POINT," DITKO SAID, "I TOOK A PENCIL AND DREW SQUIGGY LINES RADIATING FROM SPIDER-MAN'S HEAD AND SAID (TO STAN), SPIDER-MAN HAS 'SPIDER SENSE,' THE WAY BATS CAN DETECT, SENSE INSECTS, OBJECTS AT NIGHT."

"BY USING A SPLIT-FACE WHEN [PETER] PARKER MADE OR HEARD ANY REFERENCE TO SPIDER-MAN, I COULD SHOW SPIDER-MAN IN A SYMBOLIC PRESENCE IN ORDINARY SITUATIONS...WHERE SPIDER-MAN COULDN'T BE IN COSTUME/ACTION."¹³



"THE COSTUMED HERO IS WHAT

THE COMIC BOOK IS ALL ABOUT...



Spider-Man Annual #2, 1965.



Spider-Man #26, Jul. 1965.



Spider-Man #10, Mar. 1964.



Spider-Man #35, Apr. 1966.



Spider-Man #21, Feb. 1965.



Above: Spider-Man #19, Dec. 1964.

Background: Spider-Man #19.



Electro, from *Spider-Man Annual #1*, 1964.



The Green Goblin, from *Spider-Man #23*, Apr. 1965.



Mysterio, from *Spider-Man Annual #1*.

...A COSTUMED HERO IN ACTION.TM

— Steve Ditko

The Sandman, from *Spider-Man Annual #1*.



The Scorpion, from *Spider-Man #29*, Oct. 1965.



Inset: Spider-Man's rogues gallery. Background: Ditko's logo design for the letter column "Spider's Web," *Spider-Man #3*, Jul. 1963.

The Vulture, from *Spider-Man Annual #1*.



Dr. STRANGE



All Dr. Strange art appeared in *Strange Tales*. Below: Splash page detail from Dr. Strange's debut, issue #110, Jul. 1963, scripted by Lee. A month before, Lee's letter in issue #6 of the fanzine *The Comic Reader* announced, "We have a new character...named Dr. Strange... 'twas Steve's idea."¹⁷



Left and center panels above:
From *has-been to shaman*: two panels from issue #115, Dec. 1963, "The Origin of Dr. Strange!"

Panel above: David Niven meets Ronald ("Lost Horizon") Coleman. The quasi-Asian look Ditko gave Dr. Strange, from issue #117, Feb. 1964.

"Even a hero's or villain's cape can be more of a minus than a plus," Ditko said. "Dr. Strange's cape added mystery and was a flying device."¹⁸ Background and panel below: from issue #129, Feb. 1965.





The Greenwich Village verisimilitude of the Doctor's townhouse from issue #117, Feb. 1964, another factor in Marvel's freshness. "Marvel even had its heroes living in New York City," Ditko said, "a real, factual, geographical location."²⁰



Panel from the splash page of *The Spirit* by Will Eisner, Aug. 11, 1946. Was Ditko influenced by the window design of *The Spirit's* Wildwood Cemetery lair...



...or by Ken Adams' production design of a very different doctor's waiting room from the first of his many James Bond films, 1962's *Dr. No*?

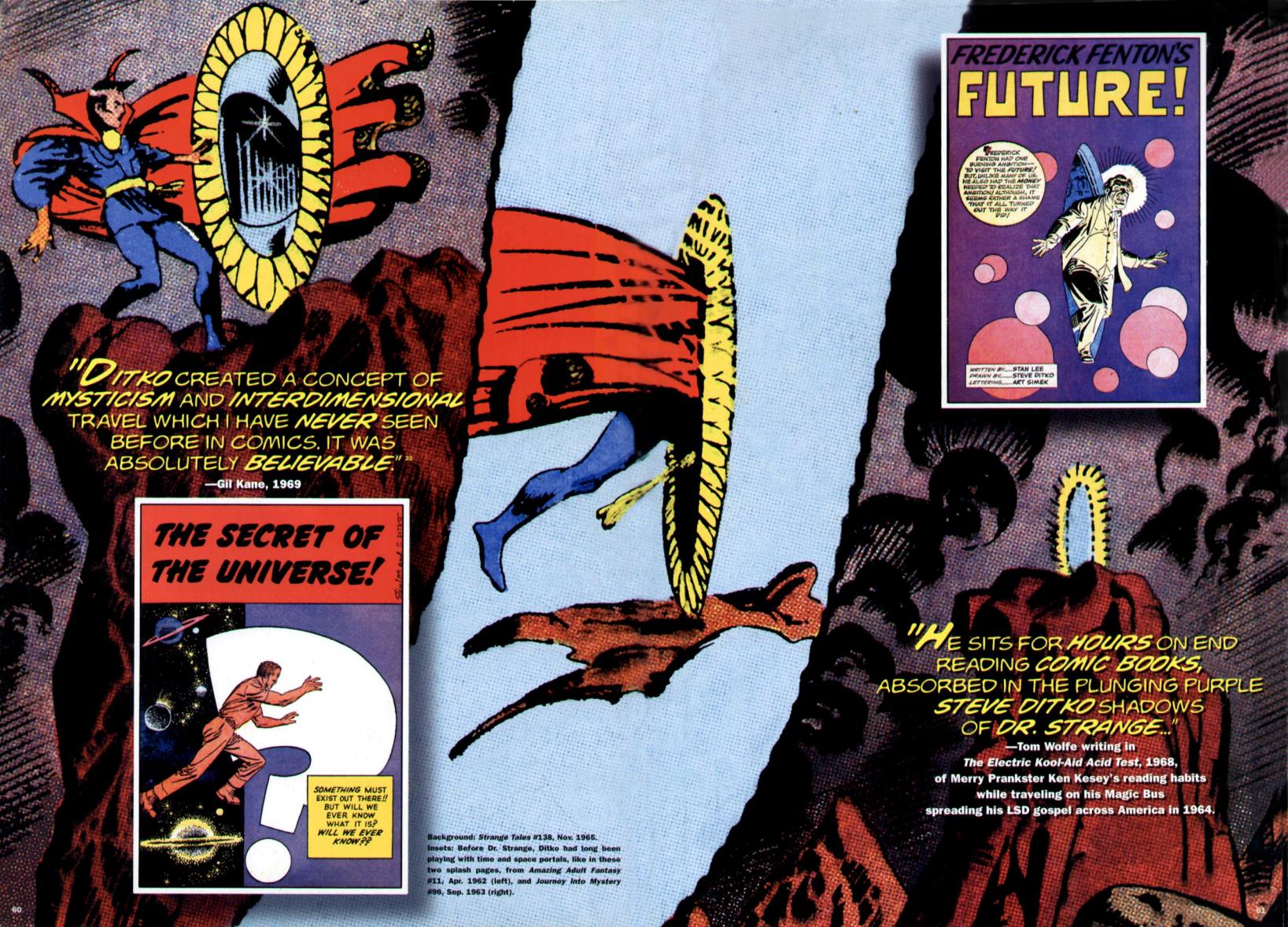
58

*"A CREATION IS ACTUALLY A RE-CREATION, A REARRANGEMENT OF EXISTING MATERIALS IN A NEW, DIFFERENT, ORIGINAL, NOVEL WAY. IN COMICS, THE MATERIALS ARE FACTS, FICTION, AND FANTASY ELEMENTS."*²¹

—Steve Ditko



Background: Inside the sanctum sanctorum of Dr. Strange (from issue #119, Apr. 1964), lit by that one-of-a-kind window!



"DITKO CREATED A CONCEPT OF MYSTICISM AND INTERDIMENSIONAL TRAVEL WHICH I HAVE NEVER SEEN BEFORE IN COMICS. IT WAS ABSOLUTELY BELIEVABLE."

—Gil Kane, 1969

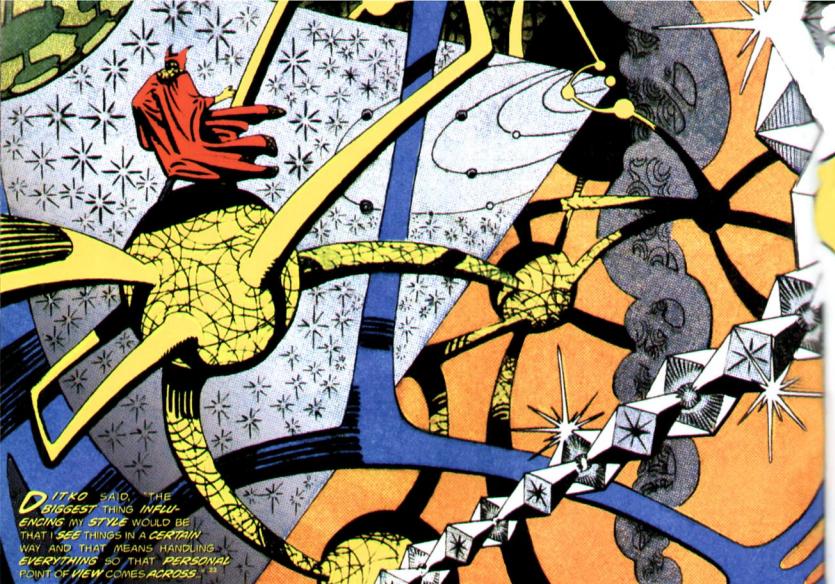


Background: Strange Tales #138, Nov. 1965.
Insets: Before Dr. Strange, Ditko had long been playing with time and space portals, like in these two splash pages, from Amazing Adult Fantasy #11, Apr. 1962 (left), and Journey Into Mystery #96, Sep. 1963 (right).



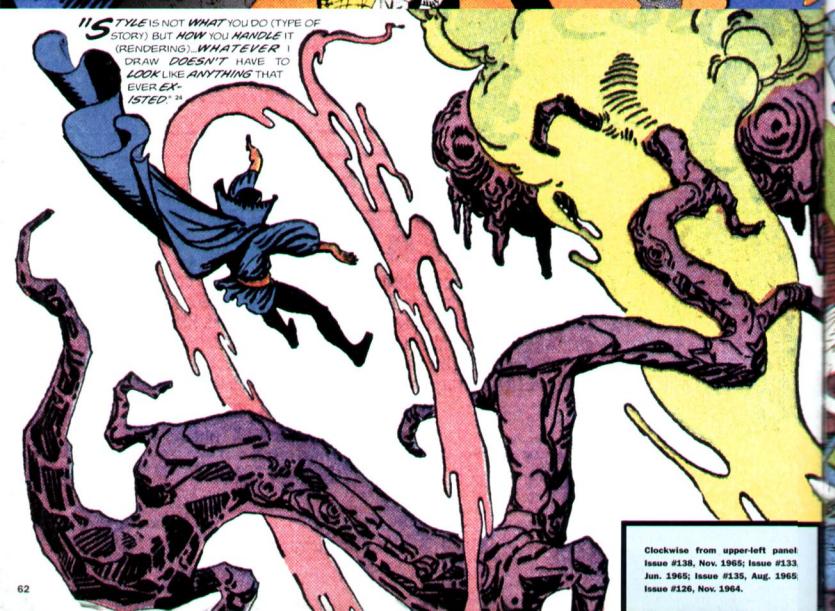
"HE SITS FOR HOURS ON END READING COMIC BOOKS, ABSORBED IN THE PLUNGING PURPLE STEVE DITKO SHADOWS OF DR. STRANGE..."

—Tom Wolfe writing in
The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test, 1968,
of Merry Prankster Ken Kesey's reading habits
while traveling on his Magic Bus
spreading his LSD gospel across America in 1964.



DITKO SAID, THE BIGGEST THING INFLUENCING MY STYLE WOULD BE THAT I SEE THINGS IN A CERTAIN WAY AND THAT MEANS HANDLING EVERYTHING SO THAT PERSONAL POINT OF VIEW COMES ACROSS. ²³

"STYLE IS NOT WHAT YOU DO (TYPE OF STORY) BUT HOW YOU HANDLE IT (RENDERING)...WHATEVER I DRAW DOESN'T HAVE TO LOOK LIKE ANYTHING THAT EVER EX-



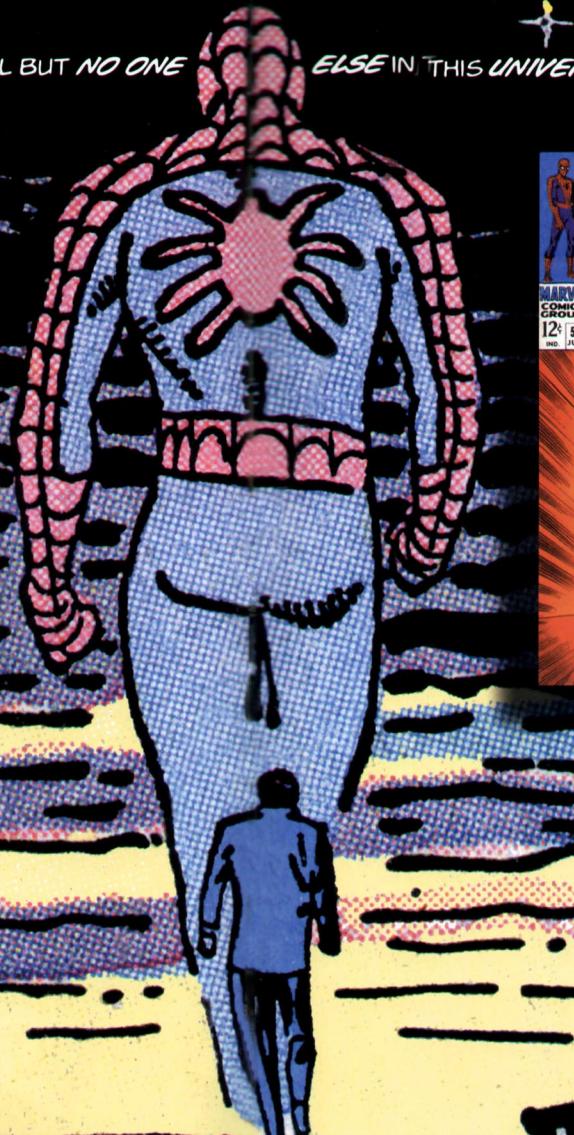
**TO THE DR. STRANGE ART WORLD
THAT DITKO DEVELOPED FROM 1963-'66,
ONE COULD APPLY THIS DESCRIPTION
THAT VICTOR HUGO GAVE OF AN
UNEARTHLY SPECTACLE:**



"IN ART, THE ARTIST INTERPRETS HIS OWN INDIVIDUAL WAY...
STYLE OR ORIGINALITY JUST HIS INDIVIDUAL INTERPRETATION. IF YOU DRAW SCENE THE WAY YOU PERSONALLY THINK IT SHOULD BE... YOU WILL HAVE YOUR OWN INDIVIDUAL STYLE. AFTER ALL, THERE'S REALLY NO ONE ELSE IN THE WORLD LIKE YOU."²⁵

Clockwise from upper-left panel:
Issue #138, Nov. 1965; Issue #133,
Jun. 1965; Issue #135, Aug. 1965;
Issue #126, Nov. 1964.

DITKO: "I KNOW WHY I LEFT MARVEL BUT NO ONE ELSE IN THIS UNIVERSE KNEW OR KNOWS WHY..." ²⁷



The End

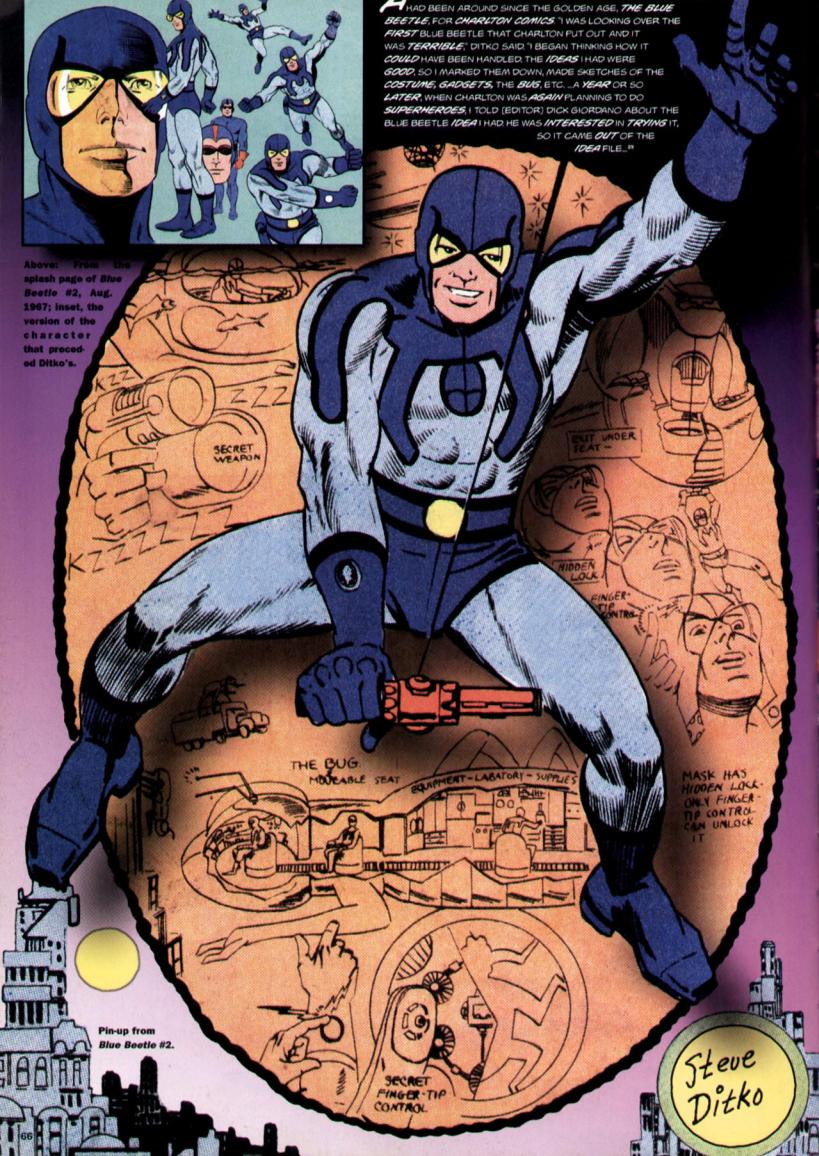
Above: The unenviable task of following Ditko on Spider-Man fell to artist John Romita. Ditko's unique stylization made the character one of the few in comic book history to be so intrinsically linked to its original artist, which played a large role in Spider-Man becoming, by the time Ditko left in 1966, the de facto mascot of Marvel itself. But Romita rose to the challenge, making his Spider-Man (represented by the cover of issue #50, Jul. 1967, one of the greatest in the history of comics) emerge from Ditko's shadow even more successful--and in a brief time, the bona fide corporate logo of Marvel Comics.

Background: The last panel of Spider-Man #11, Apr. 1964. Inset: The End, indeed: Strange Tales #146, Jul. 1966, Ditko's last Dr. Strange, and his only cover in the 36-issue run.



After leaving MARVEL, DITKO REVAMPED A SUPERHERO WHO HAD BEEN AROUND SINCE THE GOLDEN AGE, THE BLUE BEETLE, FOR CHARLTON COMICS. IT WAS LOOKING OVER THE FIRST BLUE BEETLE THAT CHARLTON PUT OUT AND IT WAS TERRIBLE; DITKO SAID, "I BEGAN THINKING HOW IT COULD BE REVAMPED AND I THOUGHT 'BEETLES' WERE GOOD, SO I HAMMED THEM DOWN, MADE SKETCHES OF THE COSTUME, GADGETS, THE THING ET C. A YEAR OR SO LATER, WHEN CHARLTON WAS AGAIN PLANNING TO DO SUPERHEROES, I TOLD (EDITOR) DICK GIORDANO ABOUT THE BLUE BEETLE IDEA I HAD. HE WAS INTERESTED IN TRYING IT, SO IT CAME OUT OF THE IDEA FILE..."

Above: From the splash page of Blue Beetle #2, Aug. 1967; inset, the version of the character that preceded Ditko's.



Pin-up from Blue Beetle #2.

EVEN MORE, PERHAPS, THAN THE BLUE BEETLE, THE CREEPER IS DITKO'S GREATEST SUPER-HERO COMIC IN 1968. IT WAS THE CLOSEST HE HAD COME TO RIDING THE LINE BETWEEN REPLICATING SPIDER-MAN AND CREATING AN ORIGINAL CHARACTER, THOUGH NEVER MAKING IT PAST A HANDFUL OF ISSUES IN THEIR ORIGINAL SILVER AGE RUNS. BOTH SUPERHEROES LIVED ON IN CREATIVE HANDS OTHER THAN DITKO'S.

(Left) Like the best film Noir, you can almost feel the rain on the cover of Beware The Creeper #1, Jun. 1968, a trait it shares with Ditko's previous classic, Spider-Man #33, Feb. 1966 (below).

66

Steve
Ditko

67



Above: *The Hawk and the Dove* #1.



The Hawk and the Dove #2, Nov. 1968.

Three far-left panels: From hawk and dove to The Hawk and The Dove: three panels from *Showcase* #75, Jun. 1968, the origin of the duo, written by Ditko with Steve Skeates; they receive their super-power to transform from "a strange, disembodied voice...a voice that comes from everywhere...and nowhere at the same time..."

Center image: From the cover of *Showcase* #75.

Center bedroom image, below right: The last panel of *The Hawk and the Dove* #1, Sep. 1968.

Like the central illustration, a confrontation between Hawk and Dove, the concept for Ditko's next DC project after The Creeper, The Hawk and the Dove was born from the headlines of 1968 America, where pro and anti-Vietnam War protesters were clashing on a daily basis. Ditko's personifications were novel, but as with The Creeper, Ditko chose to move on after a couple of issues, never to return to the super-powered brother team. Yet the Hawk and the Dove remain functioning inhabitants of the DC Universe.



JACK KIRBY

IT WOULD TAKE *MORE THAN ONE BOOK* TO DO *JUSTICE* TO THE *BREADTH* OF COMIC BOOK CHARACTERS AND CONCEPTS JACK "KING" KIRBY (1917-1994) CREATED DURING THE COURSE OF HIS SEVEN DECADES IN COMICS, WORKING FOR A MYRIAD OF PUBLISHERS. NEVERTHELESS, IT IS THE MODERN MARVEL UNIVERSE, DEVELOPED IN CONCERT WITH WRITER/EDITOR STAN LEE DURING THE *SILVER AGE*, THAT ARGUABLY STANDS AS KIRBY'S *GREATEST* AND *MOST INFLUENTIAL* BODY OF WORK.

IN THE LATE 1930s, AFTER AN *ALREADY* LEGENDARY CAREER (CO-CREATING, WITH PARTNER JOE SIMON, *CAPTAIN AMERICA*, AND ENTIRE COMIC BOOK GENRES LIKE *ROMANCE COMICS*), KIRBY ENTERED A *MORIBUND* MARVEL COMICS ON THE BRINK OF *BANKRUPTCY*. DRIVEN BY HIS *DEPRESSION-ERA* BACKGROUND, KIRBY LET LOOSE A *WELLSPRING* OF *INVENTION* THE LIKES OF WHICH HAD *NEVER* BEEN SEEN IN THE COMIC BOOK MEDIUM -- AND HAS *NEVER* SINCE BEEN *DUPPLICATED*. "I FELT THE IDEA WAS TO COME UP WITH *NEW STUFF ALL THE TIME*," KIRBY RECALLED IN 1989. "IN OTHER WORDS, THERE HAD TO BE A *BLITZ*, AND I CAME UP WITH THIS *BLITZ*."

THE *FANTASTIC FOUR*, THE *HULK*, *THOR*, THE *X-MEN*, THE *SILVER SURFER*, THE *BLACK PANTHER*, THE *INHUMANS* -- THE "*BLITZ*" OF *TIMELESS* MARVEL CHARACTERS KIRBY HELPED BRING TO *LIFE* IS *ALMOST ENDLESS*. DURING HIS TENURE AT MARVEL IN THE 1960s, KIRBY'S *MODERN*, *NATURE* STYLE *EMERGED*. THE MANY ARTISTIC *TROPS* KIRBY RENDERED -- *ABSTRACT*, *INTANGIBLE* CONCEPTS LIKE "*POWER*" AND "*ENERGY*" *MADE MANIFEST* IN *HYPERBOLIC* VISUAL DIMENSION -- *BECAME STANDARDS* IN THE MEDIUM.

KIRBY WAS AS *PROFOUND* AS HE WAS *PROLIFIC*. THE STORIES HE TOLD AT MARVEL *EXPLODED* WITH *BOUNDLESS* *IMAGINATION* AND *WONDER*. THEY WERE *KALEIDOSCOPES* OF *ACTION* AND *ADVENTURE* SET IN *PLANET-SIZED* ARENAS OF *CONFLICT*, *CATASTYMIC CLASHES* OF *TITANS* THAT READ LIKE THE *EPIC ODYSSEYS* OF *LEGENDS PAST*. KIRBY'S WORKS ARE THE *POWER* AND *GLORY* OF COMIC BOOK STORYTELLING, AND, LIKE THE LEGENDARY *ATLAS*, IT IS UPON KIRBY'S SHOULDERS THAT THE *WORLD OF SUPERHEROES RESTS*.

"THE *SECRET* OF *MY SUCCESS*," KIRBY SAID, "IS THE FACT THAT I *GAVE* TO IT. I *GAVE* IT *ALL* I *HAD*. THERE IS *BLOOD* AND *BONE* AND *SINWE* BEHIND THE *WHOLE* *THING*. THERE ARE *HOURS* OF *THINKING* AND *HOURS* OF *DOING*, AND THEN I *SPARED* *NOTHING*. I *GAVE* IT *EVERYTHING*. WHAT'S *COME* *OUT* *OF* *IT* IS FOR *YOU* TO *PICK* *UP* AND *LOOK* *AT*."

Opposite page: *Fantastic Four* #40, Jul. 1965, inked by *Vince Colletta*.
This page: Self-portrait, 1970.

STORY BY STAN LEE. ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN BUSCEMA. "MEET THE FANTASTIC FOUR!"

This is a 10 page document. Chapter one is 6 pages. Chapter 2 is 5 pages.

The ~~other~~ factors: 1) REED RICHARDS.

He is young, handsome
of the four. Invent
to Ma. He is to be
ch H. S.
D.

Barry
Walls
in Sun
years

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a small, colorful object against a dark background. The object has a textured, yellowish-orange surface with darker spots, resembling a piece of fruit or a seed pod. The hand is visible on the right side, with fingers gripping the object. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of the object and the skin of the hand.



The first appearance of DC Comics' union of recently-revamped techno-heroes, the Justice League of America, in *Brave & Bold* #28, Mar. 1960, by Murphy Anderson, the success of which prompted this response:

Fantastic Four



"Stan, if Martin wants you to create a new group of superheroes, this could be a chance for you to do it the way you've always wanted to... and create characters who have interesting personalities, who speak like real people."
— Joanie Lee, Stan Lee's wife



"Can you come up with a team of superheroes like The Justice League of America?"—Martin Goodman, Marvel Comics' publisher, to his editor/writer Stan Lee.
above: *Fantastic Four* #1, Nov. 1961, inked by Dick Ayers.

"Let's make The Thing the heavy — in other words, he's not really a good guy... he isn't interested in helping mankind the way the other three are... The Thing doesn't have the ethics that the other three have, and consequently he will probably be the most interesting one to the reader, because he'll always be unpredictable." — from Lee's plot synopsis to *Fantastic Four #1*



"When people began talking about the (atomic) bomb and its effect on human beings," said Kirby in 1989, "they began talking about mutations because that's a distinct possibility. And I said, 'That's a great idea.' That's how the Fantastic Four began, with an atomic explosion and its effect on the characters."



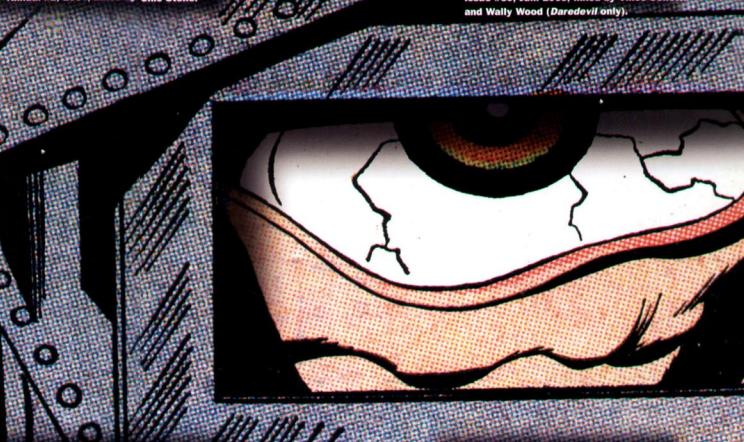
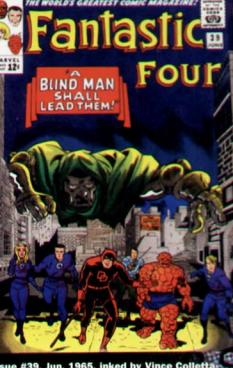
Susan Storm became invisible because of the atomic effects on her body. Ben Grimm, who was a college man and a fine-looking man, suddenly became The Thing. Reed Richards became flexible and became a character that I could work with in various ways. And there were others..."

Background and four panels: Kirby's art from *Fantastic Four* #1, Nov. 1961, inked by George Klein, over Lee's plot synopsis.





IN THE EARLY 1990S, KIRBY SAID, "WHAT WAS WRONG WITH DR. DOOM? HE WAS A VERY HIGHLY REGARDED SCIENTIST, AND... THERE WAS AN EXPLOSION IN HIS LABORATORY AND IT RUINED HIS FACE. IT SCARRED HIS FACE FOR LIFE AND, BEING THE PERFECTIONIST THAT HE WAS, HE HAD TO HIDE THAT FACE. AND HOW? IN A MASK OF IRON AND STEEL."¹²



WHEN KIRBY DID THIS STARTING DRAWING (LEFT) IN THE EARLY '70S, HE REVEALED THIS ABOUT DR. DOOM: "HE'S 5'000-LOOKING GUY AND HE ONLY HAS A TINY SCAR ON HIS CHEEK, BUT BECAUSE HE'S SUCH A PERFECTIONIST, HE CAN'T BEAR TO SEE THAT IMPERFECTION. HE ISN'T HIDING HIS FACE FROM THE PUBLIC; HE'S HIDING IT FROM HIMSELF."¹³



"THE THING WAS A TRAGEDY," KIRBY SAID. "CAN YOU IMAGINE YOURSELF AS A MUTATION, NEVER KNOWING WHEN YOU WERE GOING TO CHANGE, AND WHAT YOU'D LOOK LIKE TO YOUR FOLKS OR PEOPLE YOU LOVE?"¹¹ "EVERYBODY SEEMED TO ASSOCIATE ME WITH THE THING BECAUSE HE ACTED LIKE A REGULAR GUY..."

The geological development of The Thing's appearance, left to right:

Issue #1, Nov. 1961, inked by Dick Ayers.

Issue #25, Jun. 1963, inked by Ayers.

Issue #37, Apr. 1965, inked by Chic Stone.

Background: Issue #40, Jul. 1965, the debut of The Thing's definitive rock-look, inked by Vince Colletta.

Bottom: Cover & splash page, issue #51, Jun. 1966, inked by Sinnott; by consensus, the single most impactful Lee/Kirby story of the Silver Age.

"NO MATTER WHAT HE LOOKED LIKE, THE THING NEVER CHANGED HIS PERSONALITY -- HE WAS ALWAYS A HUMAN BEING, DESPITE HIS PHYSICAL CHANGE. BEN GRIMM ALWAYS REMAINED BEN GRIMM. I THINK THAT'S WHY THE READER LIKED HIM, THAT TOUCH OF REALITY.¹² I SUPPOSE I MUST BE A LOT LIKE BEN GRIMM."¹³

Below, left to right: Issue #45, Dec. 1965, and issue #48, Mar. 1966 both inked by Joe Sinnott. With a limited facial palette of stone, Kirby nevertheless provided The Thing with a subtle range of emotions, aided by the inks of Sinnott, considered by many Kirby's greatest inker. "He was the greatest comic illustrator of all time, and I was able to do so much work with him," Sinnott said. "To be associated with him, to be a part of his art, is compensation enough for me. I couldn't ask for anything more."¹⁴





According to Kirby himself: "The way The Thing talks and acts, you'll find that [he] is really Jack Kirby. He has my mannerisms, my way of speech, and he thinks the way I do. He's excitable... very talkative among people, and he can muscle his way through a crowd... I'm that sort of person."

Inset: On this sketch for a fan, D. Bruce Berry, Kirby's son, wrote, "Bruce, I think your drawings are great. However, you should include more demands for the characters. Keep drawing as you are, and you'll develop very quickly. Doing things — your dad, Jack Kirby '57." Berry later became one of Kirby's helpers in the 1970s.

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Background: Detail from the cover of Fantastic Four Annual #3, 1965, inked by Mike Esposito.



IT HE HULK I CREATED WHEN I SAW A WOMAN LIFT A CAR! HER BABY WAS CAUGHT UNDER THE RUNNING BOARD - HIS MOTHER WAS HORRIFIED -- AND THIS WOMAN IN DESPERATION LIFTED THE REAR END OF THE CAR!

IT SUDDENLY CAME TO ME THAT IN DESPERATION WE CAN ALL DO THAT -- WE CAN KNOCK DOWN WALLS, WE CAN GO GERSERK -- YOU CAN TEAR A HOUSE DOWN! I CREATED A CHARACTER WHO DID ALL THAT, AND CALLED HIM... THE HULK!

Above left: Journey into Mystery #82, Nov. 1960, inked by Steve Ditko. The Hulk, by definition, had the closest ties to the bygone monsters of Marvel's recent past. "It was a challenge to try to do something different with the Hulk. He was a monster, but he was, in a way, the forerunner of the Marvel heroes. We had a 'thing' we had a Hulk... and we tried to do them in a more exciting way."

I CREATED THE HULK... AND SAW HIM AS A KIND OF HANDSOME FRANKENSTEIN! I NEVER FELT THE HULK WAS A MONSTER, BECAUSE I FELT THE HULK WAS ME! I FEEL ALL THE CHARACTERS WERE ME! ¹⁴



Aurora Frankenstein model box cover, 1961; painted by the great James ("Doc Savage") Bama. With sales of over one million, the "sleeker toy of 1961" is considered a significant influence on publisher Goodman's creative dictum that The Hulk be a "Super-Frankenstein."

THE HULK



Three transformation panels from Fantastic Four #12, Mar. 1963; Script by Stan Lee, inked by Dick Ayers.



Right: Detail, Tales to Astonish #60, Oct. 1964, inked by Sol Brodsky.

Center: Splash page, of Hulk #1, inked by Reinman.

Left of center: Pin-up, Fantastic Four Annual #1, 1963, inked by Brodsky.

Detailed from cover of Tales to Astonish #67, May 1965, inked by Chic Stone. Stone's boldy outlined, colorful style in the Kirby's 1964 '65 pencils remains a favorite among Kirby aficionados.



No. 75 A MIGHTY MANHUNTER

Adventure Comics #75,
Jun. 1942, inked by
Joe Simon.



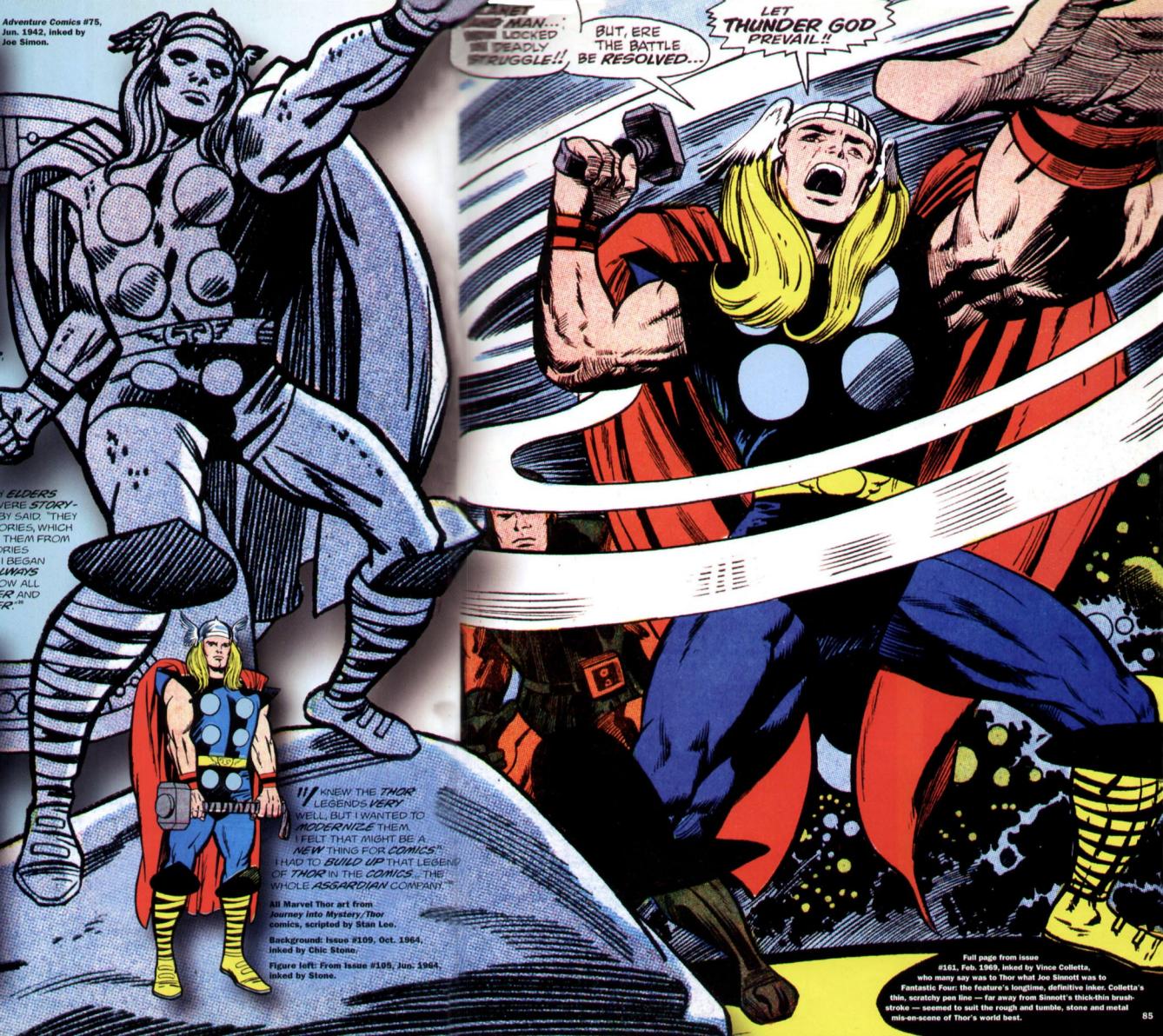
KIRBY'S ASSOCIATION WITH THOR,
THE LEGENDARY NORSE GOD OF
THUNDER, DATES EARLIER THAN
THE GOLDEN AGE OF COMICS
(WHICH WAS PAPER JOE SIMON,
WHO PICTURED THOR AS A VIL-
AIN FIGHTING DC HEROES
SANDMAN AND SANDY), TO
HIS CHILDHOOD AS A
FIRST-GENERATION
AMERICAN SON OF
IMMIGRANTS.

"MY ELDERS WERE STORY-
TELLERS," KIRBY SAID. "THEY
LOVED TO TELL STORIES, WHICH
THEY BROUGHT WITH THEM FROM
EUROPE, AND THOSE STORIES
ALWAYS INTRIGUED ME AND I BEGAN
TO CONCEIVE MY OWN." I'VE ALWAYS
BEEN A HISTORY BUFF. I KNOW ALL
ABOUT THOR AND BALDER AND
MJOLNIR THE HAMMER."

ALWAYS INTRIGUED ME AND I BEGAN
TO CONCEIVE MY OWN." I'VE ALWAYS
BEEN A HISTORY BUFF. I KNOW ALL
ABOUT THOR AND BALDER AND
MJOLNIR THE HAMMER."



Thor's debut, Issue #83, Aug. 1962,
inked by Joe Sinnott and Dick Ayers.



Full page from issue

#161, Feb. 1968, inked by Vince Colletta.

who may say was to Thor what Joe Simon was to
Fantastic Four? The answer is...Vince Colletta's ink. Colletta's
scratches, scratchy pen line — far away from Sinnott's thick-thin brush-
stroke — seemed to suit the rough and tumble, stone and metal
mis-en-scene of Thor's world best.

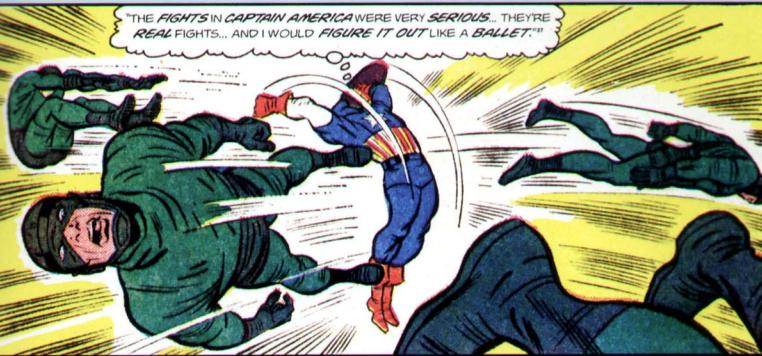
#161, Feb. 1968, inked by Vince Colletta.

Background: Issue #109, Oct. 1964,
inked by Chic Stone.

Figure left: From Issue #109, Jun. 1964,
inked by Stone.

CAPTAIN AMERICA COMICS

MARCH No. 1 COMICS



Clockwise from upper left:
Captain America #2, Mar. 1941,
inked by Joe Simon.

Detail from cover of Tales of Suspense #63, Mar. 1965, inked by Chic Stone.

The return of Captain America in
Avengers #8, Mar. 1964, inked by
Gardner Fox.

Tales of Suspense #60, Dec. 1964,
inked by Stone.

Selection from Tales of Suspense

#85, Jan. 1967, inked by Frank Giacoia

Tales of Suspense #98, Feb. 1967,
inked by Frank Giacoia.

Splash page from Tales of

Suspense #59, Nov. 1964, inked

by Stone.

"MOVEMENT TO ME IS EVERYTHING TO ME, MOTION IS LIFE!"
CAPTAIN AMERICA IS ALL-MOTION IT'S ALL MOTION, AND IT'S ALL LIFE... THAT'S MY STYLE... PURE ACTION AND REACTION"TM WHEN ASKED TO NAME HIS FAVORITE WORK OF HIS CAREER, KIRBY DIDN'T HESITATE.
"THERE'S NO DOUBT THAT CAPTAIN AMERICA BECAME SOME KIND OF AN INSTITUTION WITH SOME KIND OF A LEGENDARY STATUS. I ACCEPT THAT AS PROBABLY THE BIG ONE."TM



"...CHOREOGRAPHED,
VIOLENT BALLET."TM



AROUND 1964, IN THE PAGES OF FANTASTIC FOUR AND THOR, KIRBY'S ART AND STORYTELLING CONCEPTS TOOK LEAPS IN DEVELOPMENT, COMPLEXITY AND EXPERIMENTATION THAT SIGNALIZED THE START OF HIS MOST CREATIVE ERA. "COLLAGES WERE ANOTHER WAY OF FINDING NEW AVENUES OF ENTERTAINMENT," KIRBY SAID.¹⁵

Kirby's first collage cover, *Fantastic Four* #33, 1964, line art inked by Chic Stone.

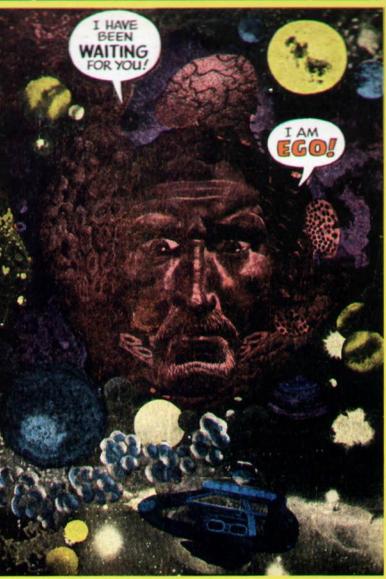
I FELT THAT MAGA
INE REPRODUCTION
OULD HANDLE THE
ANGE. IT ADDED
XTRA DIMENSION
TO COMICS.

I WANTED TO SEE IF IT COULD MATERIALIZE AND IT DID. I LOVED DOING COLLAGES. I MADE A LOT OF GOOD ONES."

"I FELT LIKE EXPERIMENT-
ING WITH GIMMICKS."



**Double-page collage from *Fantastic Four Annual #6*, Nov. 1968,
line art inked by Joe Sinnott.**



Full-page collage from *Thor* #132, Sep. 1966.

...THAT'S HOW THE NEGATIVE ZONE CAME ABOUT. I BEGAN TO EXPERIMENT. I BEGAN TO THROW MY MIND OUT IN ALL DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS... AND THAT'S HOW EGO CAME ABOUT.²³

"I HAD TO DO A STORY
ABOUT A LIVING PLANET. A
PLANET THAT WAS ALIVE; A PLAN-
ET THAT WAS INTELLIGENT... BUT
HOW DO YOU RELATE TO IT? WHY
IS IT ALIVE?"

"I FELT SOMEWHERE OUT IN THE UNIVERSE, IT COMES DENSER AND LIQUID-- AND IN THIS D, THERE WAS A GIANT VIRUS, AND IF IT MAINTAINED ISOLATED...



...FOR MILLIONS AND MILLIONS OF YEARS, IT WOULD BEGIN TO THINK-- TO EVOLVE BY ITSELF. BY THE TIME WE REACHED IT, MIGHT BE QUITE SUPERIOR TO US-- AND THAT WAS EGO."*

Double-page
collage from
fantastic Four
2, May 1967,
line art inked
by Sinnott.

"I CREATED THE INHUMANS IN '66 BECAUSE THE COMPETITION WAS COMING UP IN THE FIELD, SO I THOUGHT WE WOULD TRY A NEW CONCEPT. THE FAMILY CONCEPT SO WHEN SOMEONE CAME UP WITH ONE SUPERHERO, WE WOULD SLAP THEM WITH FIVE!"

"MY IDEA OF A SUPERHERO IS SOME GUY WHO CAN ENGAGE IN ACTION AND YOU CAN'T ENGAGE IN ACTION IN A BUSINESS SUIT SO I ALWAYS GAVE THEM A SKINTIGHT UNIFORM WITH A BELT. NOW I DRESS THEM UP. BLACK BOLT (RIGHT) BEGAN TO DRESS UP THE LIGHTNING INSIGNIA. KARNAK WITH THE JUDO TYPE UNIFORM IT'S ALMOST ORIENTAL AND HALF EGYPTIAN AND MEDUSA WITH HER HAIR."

"THEIR COSTUMES HAVE BECOME MORE OR LESS COMPLEX. I FELT THEY HAD TO. I FELT THE SCENERY HAD TO BECOME MORE COMPLEX. I FELT A SIMPLE COSTUME IN THE TECHNOLOGICAL ERA THAT WE HAVE TODAY WOULD LOOK OUT OF PLACE, SO I MADE THEM AS COMPLEX AS POSSIBLE."

GORGON



MAGNIFICENT MEDUSA

Inset this page: Pin-ups from *Fantastic Four Annual* #5, Nov. 1967.



KARNAK
THE SHATTERER



THE MYSTERIOUS
TRITON

All art from
Fantastic Four
comics, scripted by
Lee, inked by Sinnott.
Background: Issue #59,
Feb. 1967.

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THE SHATTERER IS A TRADEMARK OF MARVEL COMICS GROUP.
THE SHATTERER AND KARNAK ARE TRADEMARKS OF MARVEL COMICS GROUP.
KARNAK AND MEDUSA ARE TRADEMARKS OF MARVEL COMICS GROUP.
TRITON IS A TRADEMARK OF MARVEL COMICS GROUP.
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With
apologies to Munch's
"The Scream," Kirby's
sequence (continuing
onto the next page) from
issue #57, Dec. 1966,
the unleashing of Black
Bolt's inhuman ability for
the first time, is just as
convincing in its
rendering of an abstract
concept — intangible,
infinite power — made
manifest.



STUDENTS OF KIRBY'S SEE, IN HIS MANY WIDESCREEN SCENES OF UTTER DEVASTATION (OF WHICH THIS--THE DESTRUCTION OF THE INHUMAN'S DOMED CITY BY BLACK BOLT'S SONIC SCREAM--IS PERHAPS THE EPITOME), THE INFLUENCE GROWING UP IN THE CACOPHONOUS, CLAUSTROPHOBIC, CRUMBLING TENEMENT SLUMS OF NEW YORK'S LOWER EAST SIDE HAD ON KIRBY GRAPHICALLY.

SAVE ME,
BLACK BOLT!!
SAVE ME,
MY BROTHER!

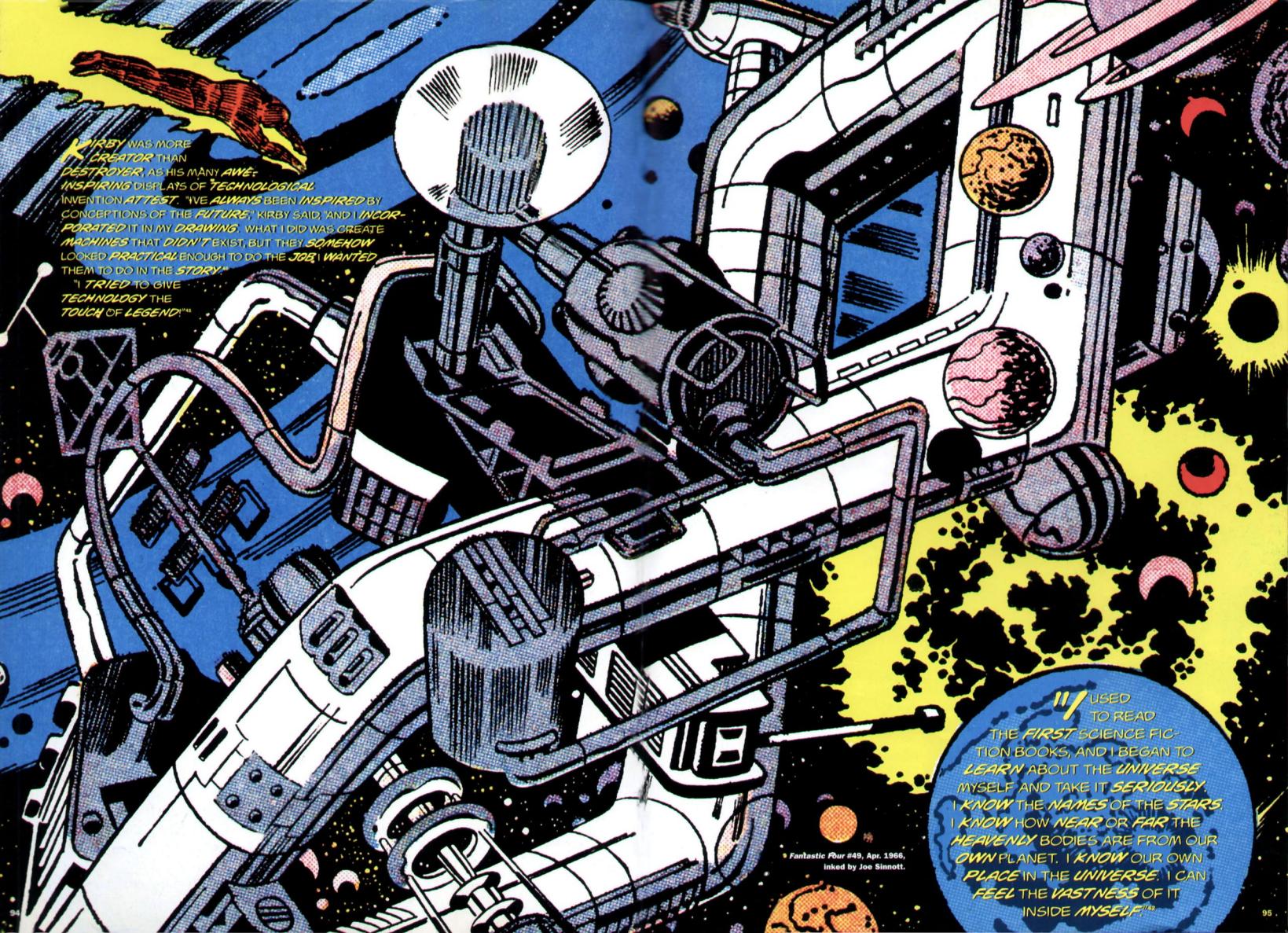


"IF YOU GROW UP IN A CITY AND SEE THE CITY," KIRBY RECALLED, "YOU'LL GET A CITY AS IT REALLY IS, WITH ALL THE DETAIL THAT YOU REMEMBER. I WOULD DRAW THAT CITY EXACTLY AS IT WAS: BRICK BY BRICK, THE GARBAGE IN THE STREET AND THE THINGS FLOATING DOWN TO THE SEWER."

"WAS THERE IN THE SHADOW OF THE CHIPPED BRICK WALLS OF THE SLUM MY FIRST DRAWING BOARD?"

Background: Leo's original caption read, "Black Bolt and Maximus find themselves in the center of a lethal rain of debris—the remnants of a once-proud city—as the vibrations continue to grow, to spread, to become more and more uncontrollable!"

Inset: Double-page spread from the autobiographical "Street Code," pencils, Argosy Magazine, Nov. 1990.



KIRBY WAS MORE
A CREATOR THAN
DESTROYER, AS HIS MANY AWE-
INSPIRING DISPLAYS OF TECHNOLOGICAL
INVENTION ATTEST. "WE ALWAYS BEEN INSPIRED BY
CONCEPTIONS OF THE FUTURE," KIRBY SAID, AND I INCOR-
PORATED IT IN MY DRAWING. WHAT I DID WAS CREATE
MACHINES THAT DIDN'T EXIST, BUT THEY SOMEHOW
LOOKED PRACTICAL ENOUGH TO DO THE JOB I WANTED
THEM TO DO IN THE STORY."

"I TRIED TO GIVE
TECHNOLOGY THE
TOUCH OF LEGEND!"

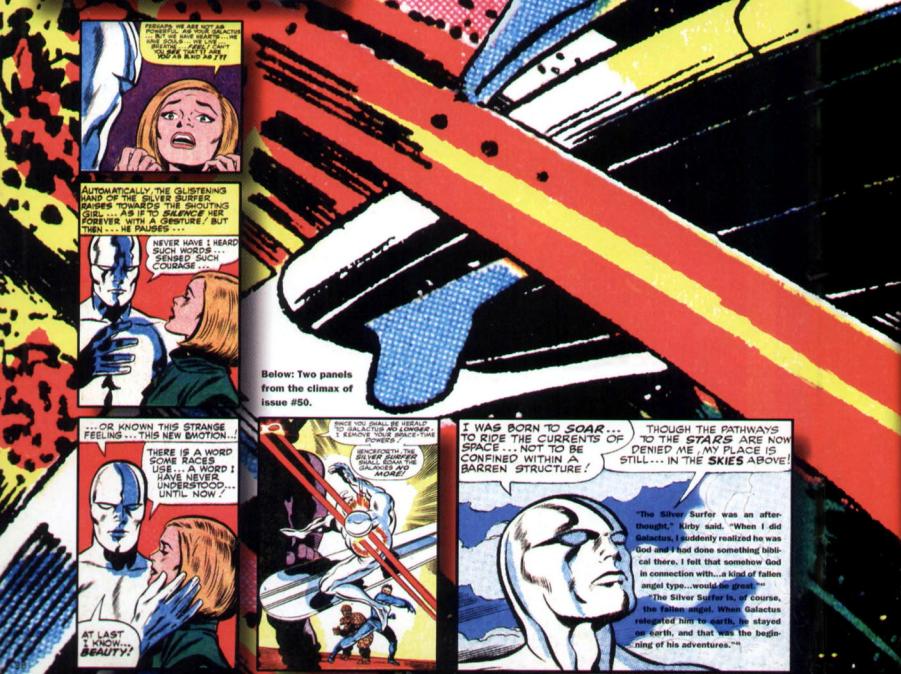
111 USED
TO READ
THE FIRST SCIENCE FIC-
TION BOOKS, AND I BEGAN TO
LEARN ABOUT THE UNIVERSE
MYSELF AND TAKE IT SERIOUSLY.
I KNOW THE NAMES OF THE STARS.
I KNOW HOW NEAR OR FAR THE
HEAVENLY BODIES ARE FROM OUR
OWN PLANET. I KNOW OUR OWN
PLACE IN THE UNIVERSE. I CAN
FEEL THE VASTNESS OF IT
INSIDE MYSELF!"



"MY CONCEPTION OF THE SILVER SURFER WAS A HUMAN BEING FROM SPACE IN THAT PARTICULAR FORM HE CAME IN WHEN EVERYBODY BEGAN SURFING. I READ ABOUT IT IN THE PAPER. THE KIDS IN CALIFORNIA WERE BEGINNING TO SURF. I COULDN'T DO AN ORDINARY TEENAGER SURFING SO I DREW A SURFBOARD WITH A MAN FROM OUTER SPACE ON IT."

"AND I SAID, SUPPOSE THERE WAS A SURFER WHO SURFED THE UNIVERSE?" AND OF COURSE THE SURFER DOES THAT HE ALSO HAS TO HAVE A GODLIKE APPEARANCE... BEING ALL SILVER GIVES HIM THE KIND OF AURA THAT MAKES HIM DIFFERENT FROM OURSELVES."

All art from *Fantastic Four* comics, scripted by Stan Lee, inked by Joe Sinnott. Insets, left: issue #50, May 1966, the final part of the trilogy, which introduced the cosmic being Galactus, and his herald, the Silver Surfer. & Three panel sequence from issue #49, Apr. 1966, in which Ben Grimm's blind girlfriend Alicia gets through to the Surfer with the only thing in the universe that could pierce his silver armor: love. Background: "Issue #55, Oct. 1966."



"IT THIS BE
DOOMSDAY!"

"**G**ALACTUS WAS GOD, AND I WAS LOOKING FOR GOD WHEN I FIRST CAME UP WITH GALACTUS. I WAS VERY AWED BY HIM. I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH THE IDEA, SO I DREW IT AS ABOUT GOD, BUT WHAT DOES HE LOOK LIKE? WELL, HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE AWESOME, AND GALACTUS IS AWESOME TO ME. I DREW HIM LARGE AND AWESOME. NO ONE EVER KNEW THE EXTENT OF HIS POWERS OR ANYTHING, AND I THINK SYMBOLICALLY THAT'S OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD."

"**G**ALACTUS IS A TRUE GOD--A GOD IN THE MEANING OF MODERN MYTHOLOGY, NOT GOD IN A SPIRITUAL SENSE, BUT A GOD IN A MYTHOS IN CONTEXT. WHAT I'M TAKING IS THE OLD RELIGIONS AND TRANSFORMING THEM INTO OUR CONTEMPORARY LIVES, SO WE CAN ACCEPT THEM."

ALL ART FROM FANTASTIC FOUR COMICS, SCRIBED BY LEE, INKED BY SIMONE.

Inset above: Issue #49, Apr. 1966.
Background: Issue #50, May 1966, the debut of a patented Kirby energy display.

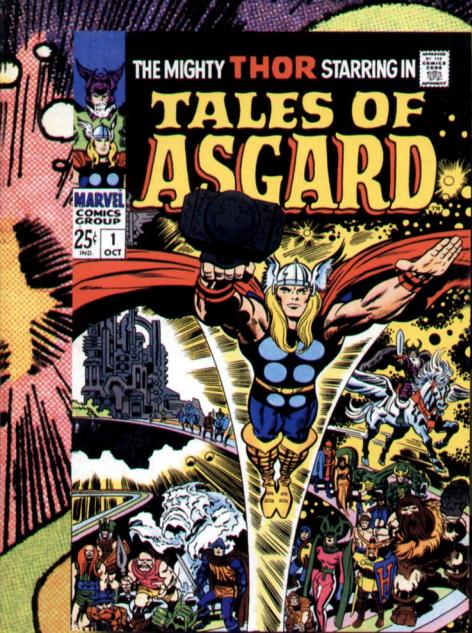
Inset below and background opposite: In this sequence from issue #57, Dec. 1966, Kirby transferred the Surfer's "power cosmic" to Doom, codifying all of his graphic power and energy motifs in the process. The issue climaxes with the most dramatic definition of victory and defeat in the history of comics in a single image.



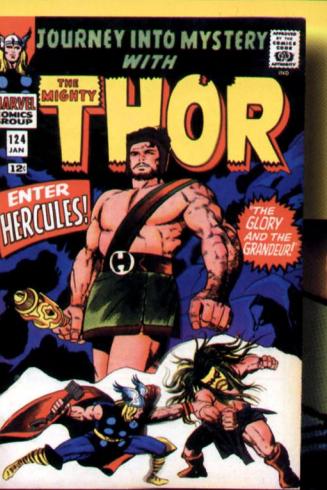
NOW, IT IS I WHO POSSESS THE COSMIC POWER WHICH ONCE WAS HIS!

NEVER BEFORE HAS ANY ONE HUMAN BEING BEEN AS TOTALLY SUPREME--AS INVINCIBLY SUPERIOR--AS I!

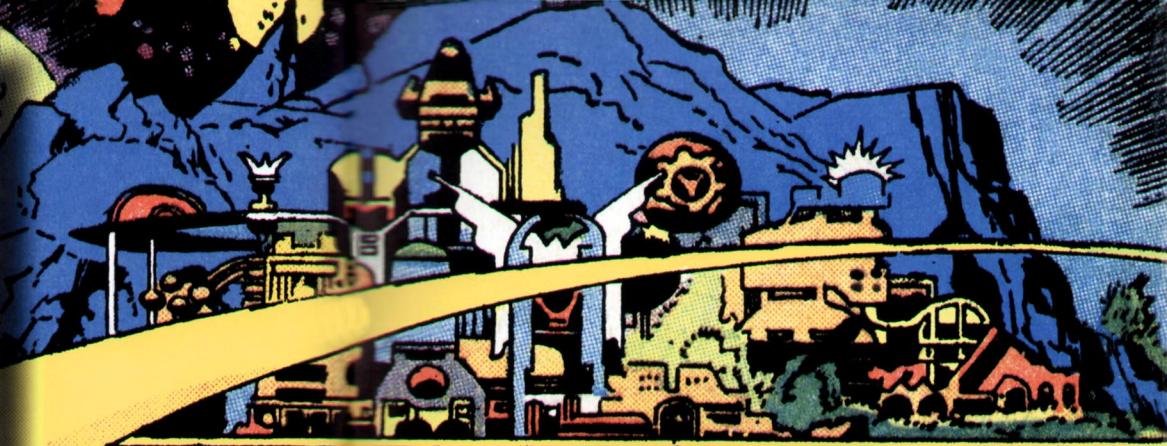
NOW LET MANKIND BEWARE--FOR DOCTOR DOOM HAS ATTAINED POWER BEYOND LIMIT--POWER ENOUGH TO CHALLENGE GALACTUS HIMSELF!



"I began to realize," Kirby said, "what a wonderful and awesome place the universe is, and that helped me in comics because I was looking for the awesome. I found it in Thor." The collected backup stories in *Tales of Asgard* #1, Oct. 1968 (above; cover inked by Frank Giacola), were the catalyst that broadened Thor's scope. Over the course of the decade, Kirby transformed Thor from Superman-in-a-Viking-costume to an iconic warrior-king with a stature that befitted his title of god. Kirby surrounded him with a cast of who's seems to be thousands of fellow warriors, cosmic beings, deities and demons for awe-inspiring adventures beyond Earth, into Asgard, and through the universe. With Stan Lee's pseudo-Shakespearean wordsmithing elevating the prose, Kirby's Thor scaled heights in the Silver Age that reached that comic Valhalla whose sole occupant was Hal Foster's comic strip masterpiece, Prince Valiant.



Kirby's Hercules: Thor #124, Jan. 1966, inked by Colletta.



Inset, left: Kirby's Samson: Thor #123, Dec. 1965, inked by Vince Colletta. Background: The Rainbow Bridge of Asgard, from Thor #123, inked by Colletta.



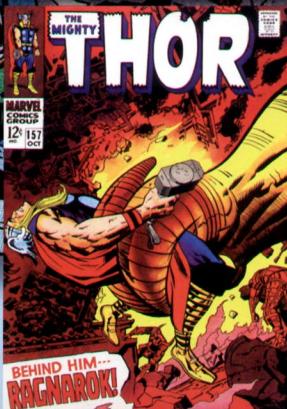
"THE TRUTH IS THAT THE GREEKS HAD HERCULES, EVEN AS THE NORSE MEN HAD THOR, AND THROUGH THE AGES WE'VE HAD HEROES SIMILAR TO THEM. IN AGES PAST, WE HAD SAMSON, WHO'S NO MORE THAN A SUPER-HERO, AND TODAY WE HAVE OUR SUPER-HEROES. WE BELIEVE IN THEM, BECAUSE WE BELIEVE IN OURSELVES!"



Kirby's Pieta: Thor #127, Apr. 1966, inked by Colletta.



KIRBY TOOK HIS SUPERHEROES-AS-GODS CONCEPTS AS FAR AS HE COULD IN THE 1960S, IN AN ACTING RAGNAROK, THE ASSARDIAN ARMAGEDDON, WHEN HE FELT HE COULD'T TAKE THEM FURTHER. AT MARVEL, HE LEFT THE COMPANY IN 1970 AND TOOK THOSE IDEAS TO DC, WHERE HE BOTH WROTE AND DREW WHAT MANY CONSIDER HIS



MAGNUM OPUS, THE FOURTH WORLD SERIES OF FOUR INTERRELATED COMIC BOOKS, OF WHICH NEW GODS WAS THE FLAGSHIP TITLE.

Background: The splash page of the May 1966 Thor #128's Tales of Asgard episode, "Aftermath!" scripted by Lee, inked by Vince Colletta. Inset: Thor #157, Oct. 1968, inked by Colletta.



IVE READ ALL THE LEGENDS THAT WE WROTE BEFORE OUR TIME, "KIRBY SAID, SO I FEEL THAT WE HAD NO LEGENDS OF OUR OWN. I HAD TO CREATE A MODERN LEGEND OF OUR OWN, AND I DID THIS WITH THE NEW GODS. IT WAS A FATHER-SON AFFAIR, JUST LIKE ALL OUR PREVIOUS LEGENDS. THERE WAS THOR AND ODIN, THERE WAS

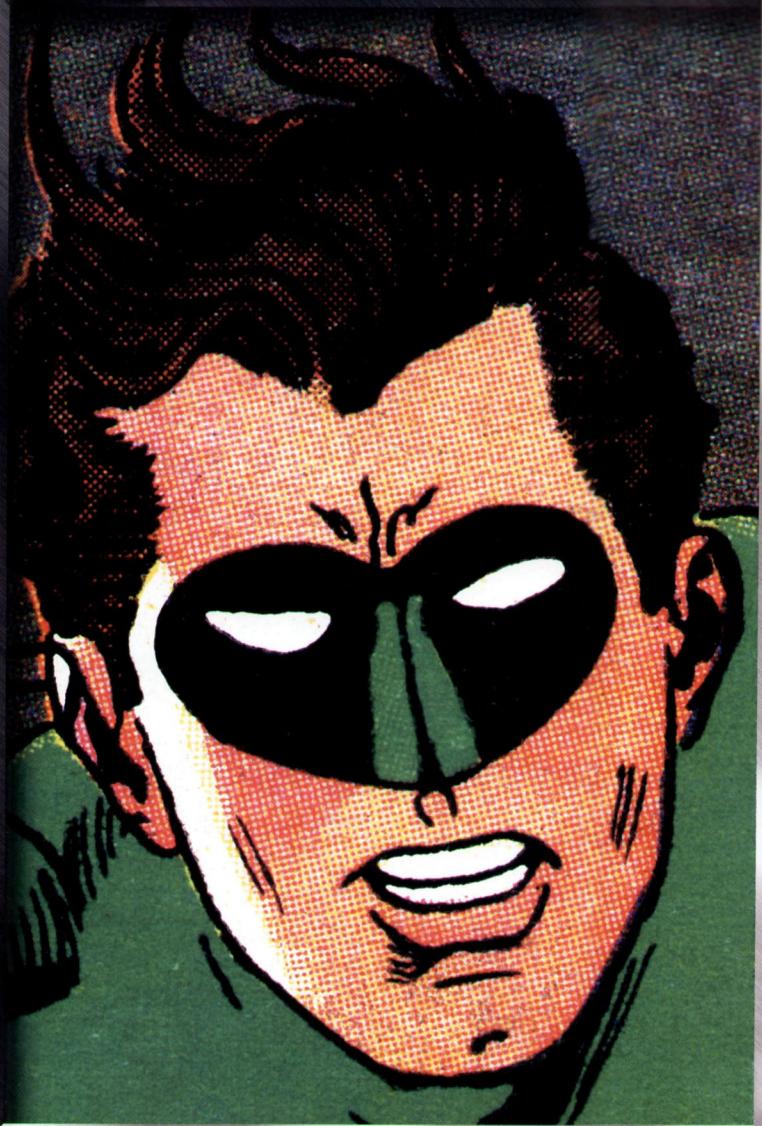


THE REAL ORION FIGHTS FOR EARTH!

HERCULES AND ZEUS, AND I FELT THAT IN OUR AGE, IT WOULD BE DARKSEID AND ORION."

I WAS CREATING A MYTHOLOGY FOR THE 1970s."

Background: The splash page of New Gods #1, Mar. 1971 (whose precursor was the splash page opposite), written by Kirby, inked by Colletta. Inset: New Gods #1.



IF THE HUMAN FIGURE IS THE FOUNDATION OF COMIC BOOK DRAWING -- INDEED, OF ALL DRAWING -- THEN ITS EPIPHANY IS FOUND IN THE DISTINCTIVE, DYNAMIC STYLE OF GIL KANE (1926-2000), ONE THAT MATURED DEMONSTRABLY DURING LENGTHY RUNS ON A PAIR OF DC SILVER AGE HEROES, GREEN LANTERN AND THE ATOM. KANE'S FIGUREWORK WAS BOTH A PRIMER ON STRUCTURAL ANATOMY AND MUSCULATURE, AND A LIFELONG QUEST TO BRING HIS CHARACTERS TO LIFE, BY ENDOWING THEM WITH ALL THE GRACE AND LYRICISM HIS DRAWING PROWESS COULD MUSTER.

WHEN HE BEGAN TO ILLUSTRATE FOR MARVEL IN 1966 (THE FIRST MAINSTREAM COMIC BOOK ARTIST TO SIMULTANEOUSLY WORK FOR BOTH MAJOR PUBLISHERS WITHOUT USING A PSEUDONYM), KANE PAID HOMAGE TO HIS MENTOR JACK KIRBY BY INCORPORATING ALL OF KIRBY'S NEW DYNAMISM INTO KANE'S OWN IDIOSYNCRATIC STYLE. THIS CAUSED A QUANTUM DEVELOPMENTAL LEAP IN KANE'S OWN ARTISTRY, WHICH HE FED BACK TO THE FIELD IN TWO UNLIKELY VEHICLES: A GRADE-B SUPERHERO FOR MARVEL AND A TOY-BASED SUPERHERO FOR DC. THEY WERE THE BLUEPRINT ALL HIS POST-SILVER AGE WORK WOULD FOLLOW: CONCENTRATION ON THE INNATE POTENTIAL OF THE HUMAN FORM TO INSPIRE, WHILE CONSTANTLY REFINING FIGURES, LAYOUTS AND PANEL COMPOSITIONS FOR MAXIMUM POWER, MOVEMENT, AND FLUIDITY.

IN ADDITION TO BEING ONE OF COMIC BOOK ART'S GREATEST ILLUSTRATORS, KANE WAS ONE OF ITS MOST INTELLECTUAL, ARTICULATE SPOKESMEN, A THINKING MAN'S ARTIST, OUTSPOKEN AND OPINIONATED ON TOPICS DIRECTLY -- AND TANGENTIALLY -- RELATED TO COMIC BOOK ART, ITS HISTORY AND HIS PLACE IN IT. "THE THING WITH COMICS," KANE SAID, "IS THAT THEY ULTIMATELY PRESENT A SERIES OF AESTHETIC PROBLEMS, AND THE ONLY THING I RECOGNIZE IS THAT I SPENT MY WHOLE LIFE TRYING TO RESOLVE THEM."¹

ONE OF THE IRONIES OF GIL KANE'S SILVER AGE CAREER IS THAT HIS REPUTATION AS DEFINITIVE GREEN LANTERN ARTIST IS IN CONVERSE PROPORTION TO HIS SELF-ASSESSMENT. "I THINK A LOT OF MY WORK ON GREEN LANTERN WAS VERY PRIMITIVE," HE SAID. "THE CHARACTER WAS TOO MORONIC TO HAVE A POWER THAT WAS GENERALLY ATTRIBUTED TO A GOD. IT BECAME POINTLESS AND IMBECILIC SO MY CONCERN DRIFTED INTO IMPROVING MY CRAFT."

Right: Figure from a splash page in Green Lantern #46, Jul. 1966, inked by Sid Greene. Although Kane preferred Greens because they were the most consistent and best inks of the DC roster, he came closest to realizing the images from my point of view," he felt, overall, "that pencils 'are the most profound aspect of the work. Inking is a genuine skill and some people do it as a high art, but the truth of the matter is that there is nothing equivalent to sitting down to that empty page and making it happen on the page."



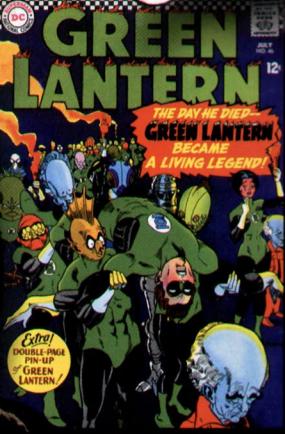
Cover right: One of the best of the rare '60s DC wash covers, inked by artist Jack Adler rendered over artist's pencils, Green Lantern #8, Oct. 1961.



Left cover: Green Lantern squares off against his Golden Age doppelganger, watched over by the Guardians of the Universe, whose large, bald-headed appearance Kane based on Israeli statesman David Ben-Gurion. Green Lantern #40, Oct. 1965, inked by Murphy Anderson.



Figure left and below:
From the double-page pinup in Green Lantern #46, and the cover, penciled and inked by Kane, featuring the alien Green Lantern Corps.



"I WORKED VERY HARD TO MAKE MY FIGURES MORE FLUID," KANE SAID OF HIS DECADE-LONG DRAWING RUN ON GREEN LANTERN. "I WORKED OBSESSIVELY TO MAKE MY WORK BETTER." THE RESULTS OF WHICH CAN BE SEEN IN THE BRIEF STRETCH OF LATER ISSUES KANE INKED HIMSELF (#50-57), AND THOSE OF HIS OTHER SILVER AGE ICON, THE ATOM.

Right:
Figure from
Green Lantern
#40, Oct. 1965,
inked by Anderson.
Primitive? Perhaps
Kane meant "primitive".
In this sense, when he
said, "The one quality I'm
always trying to push through
in my work is grace and power.
Sort of primitive lyricism...."

DOLL MAN

SPRING ISSUE NO. 12 10¢

NOT ANY BIGGER,
BETTER!



"I CREATED THE ATOM," KANE SAID. "WHEN I WAS DOING GREEN LANTERN AND I KNEW DC OWNED (THE NAME) THE ATOM. I ALSO KNEW THAT THEY NOW OWNED THE DOLL MAN TITLE, SO I CREATED A NEW CHARACTER BASED ON THE TWO. I MADE UP A SERIES OF DRAWINGS AND SUBMITTED THEM TO JULIE [SCHWARTZ, EDITOR], WHO SUBMITTED THEM FOR THE FINAL APPROVAL FROM [PUBLISHER] JACKIE BOWITZ."

"I GOT THE OK FOR IT, AND THAT WAS IT. WE WERE OFF AND RUNNING."¹¹



"ALL I'VE EVER DONE IN MY MIND IS ATTEMPT TO UNDERSTAND THE FIGURES SO I COULD PRESENT THEM THE MOST GRACEFUL WAY POSSIBLE. I'M ABOUT BALLET, TRAMPOLINE, AND JUMPING."¹²

"THE BALLET OF VIOLENCE, SLIGHTLY ADJUSTED EACH TIME TO MAKE IT SEEM FRESH AND VIBRANT."

"THAT'S WHY I LOOK TO BALLET DANCERS AND TRAPEZE ARTISTS FOR MY MOVEMENTS, IN ORDER TO GET THE GRACE AND FLUIDITY OF THEIR ACTIONS AND TO ALSO CAPTURE THE STRENGTH IN THEIR BODIES..."¹²

"THERE IS SOME-THING EXTRA-ORDINARY AND COMPEL-LING IN THAT MOVEMENT, AND THAT'S WHAT I'VE BROUGHT TO MY COMICS."¹³

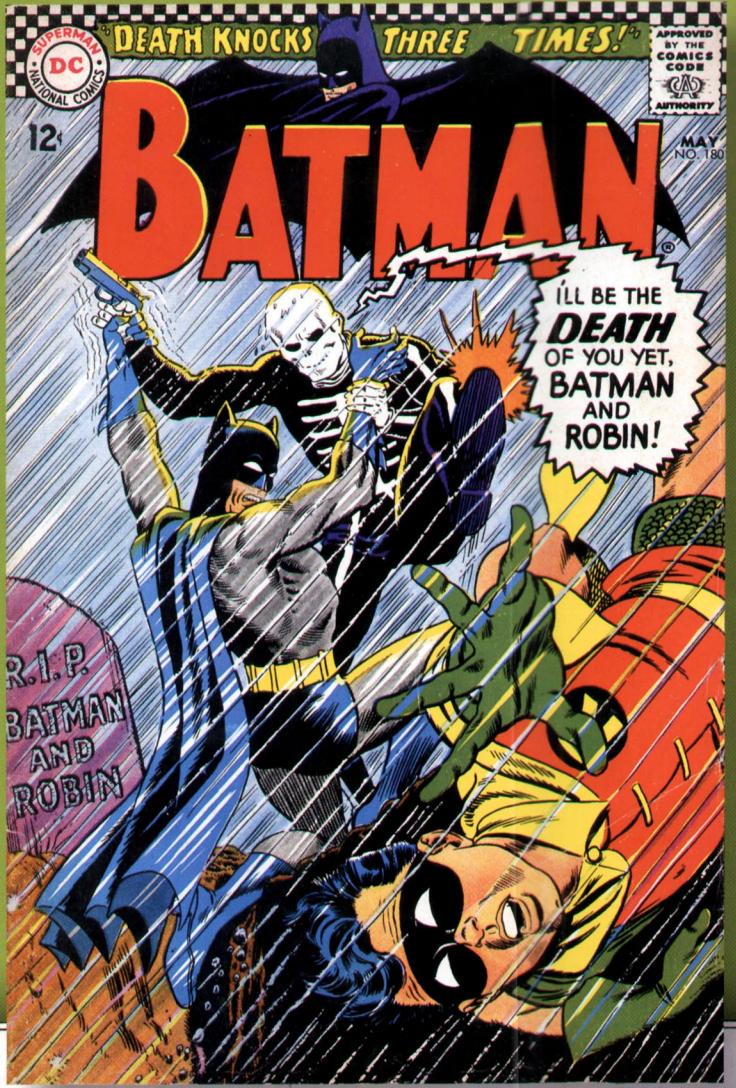


"THIS PREOCCUPATION WITH GRACEFUL MOVEMENTS WITH POWER MAY LIMIT ME, BUT I'M ALSO INTERESTED IN SHAPE, PATTERN DESIGN OF PAGE AND PANELS, DEEP SPACE, AND THE RELATION OF EACH PANEL ON THE PAGE TO THE PANELS AROUND IT. THAT IS ESSENTIALLY WHAT I AM INTERESTED IN DOING IN COMICS."¹⁴

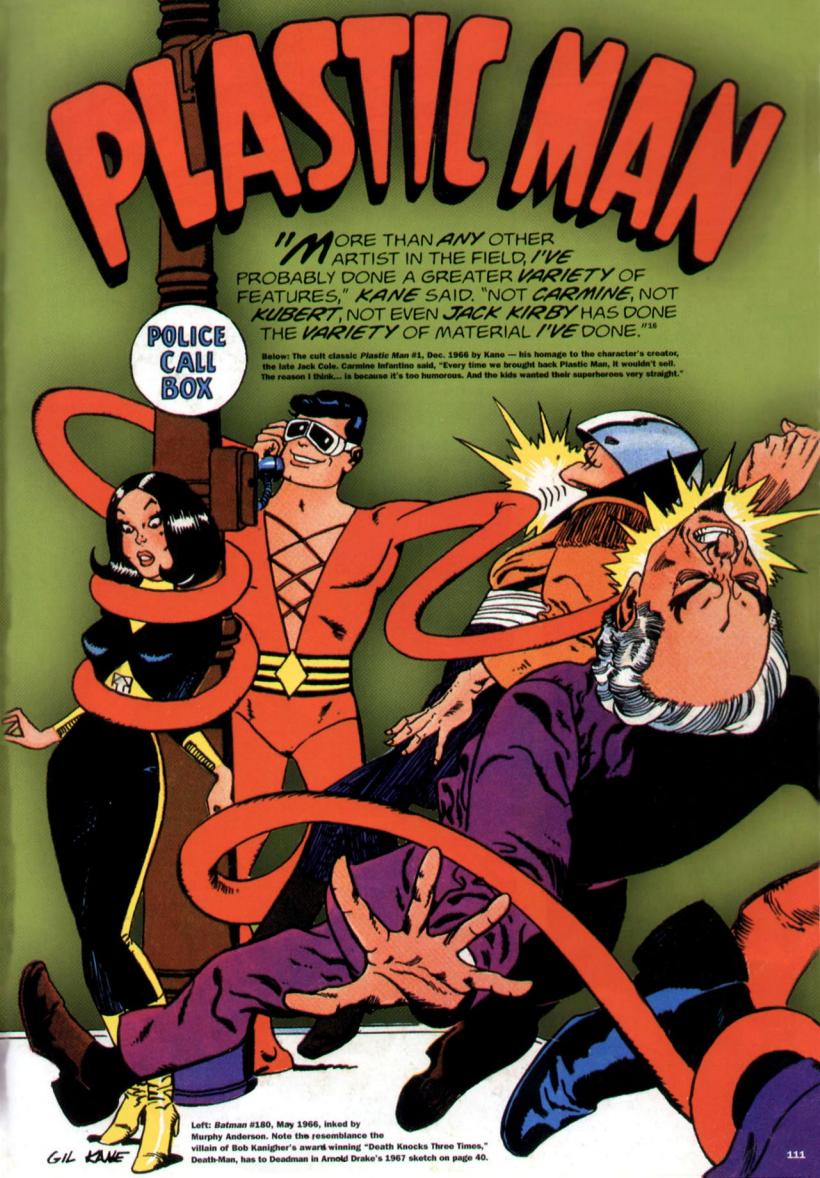


Left page,
left to right:
Doll Man #12, Spring
1947. The Atom #2,
Nov. 1962. The Atom #12,
Murphy Anderson
Sequence from splash
page of The Atom #28,
Jan. 1963. The most
recurring Kane motif:
the hand holding the
pencil, from the splash
page of The Atom #28, May 1968.

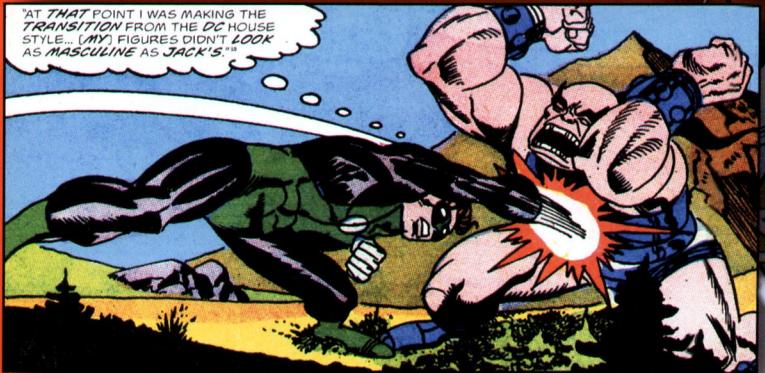
Background: Double-page spread
from The Atom #28, Sept. 1968, by Kane.
Right page, top to bottom: The Atom #32, Sept. 1967,
and The Atom #36, Jan. 1968, both inked by Anderson.



"ON A FLAT, TWO-DIMENSIONAL PAGE, THERE MUST BE FIGURES COMING AT YOU OR MOVING AWAY FROM YOU. THAT'S WHY I BECAME PREOCCUPIED WITH DEEP SPACE ON THE SIDES, TO INTENSIFY THE SENSE OF DEPTH. AS A RESULT, I LIKE TO DO DIAGONAL PANELS,¹⁰ OR DIAGONAL COVERS LIKE THE BATMAN CLASSIC ABOVE, ONE OF THE FEW (IF NOT THE BEST) INSTANCES OF KANE'S NON-GREEN LANTERN/ATOM WORK DURING HIS FIRST TENURE AT DC COMICS."



Left: Batman #124, May 1960, inked by Murphy Anderson. Note the resemblance to the villain of Bob Kanigher's award winning "Death Knocks Three Times," Death-Man, has to Deadman in Arnold Drake's 1967 sketch on page 40.

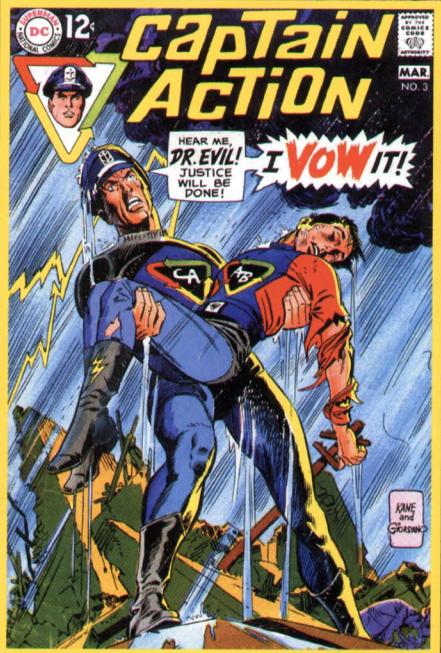


Left page top panel:
Tales of Suspense #85, Jan. 1967, by Kirby, inked by Frank Giacola.

Middle panel:
Green Lantern #53, Jun. 1967, by Kane.

Bottom panel:
Tales of Suspense #89, May 1967, by Kane.
Right page: Cover of *The Atom* #36, May 1968 by Kirby.

"THE ONLY GREAT OVER RIDING IDEA I HAD IN EVERYTHING... WAS TO INTENSIFY THE READING EXPERIENCE IN COMICS."²⁴



"ONCE I DEVELOPED A TECHNIQUE... I BEGAN TO ACHIEVE MY END. FIRST WAS TO CREATE INTERESTING COMPOSITIONS AND TO BE ABLE TO DESIGN THE PAGE, TO BE ABLE TO ARTICULATE FIGURES WITH FORCE AND POWER... THEN IT BECAME IMPORTANT TO ME TO INFLUENCE THE MATERIAL I WAS DOING AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE..."

"AT EVERY COMPANY I WORKED FOR I WAS INSISTENT ENOUGH... TO GET THE FEATURES THAT MOST SATISFIED MY IMMEDIATE NEED."²⁵

"I DID A SERIES OF BOOKS (FOR DC) CALLED CAPTAIN ACTION. AFTER THE FIRST TWO BOOKS, I WROTE THE REST OF THEM MYSELF. I LOVED THEM!... JULIE [SCHWARTZ] SAID IT WAS THE BEST STUFF HE EVER READ IN COMICS."

Left page, *Top:*
Captain Action #3,
inked by Dick
Giordano.

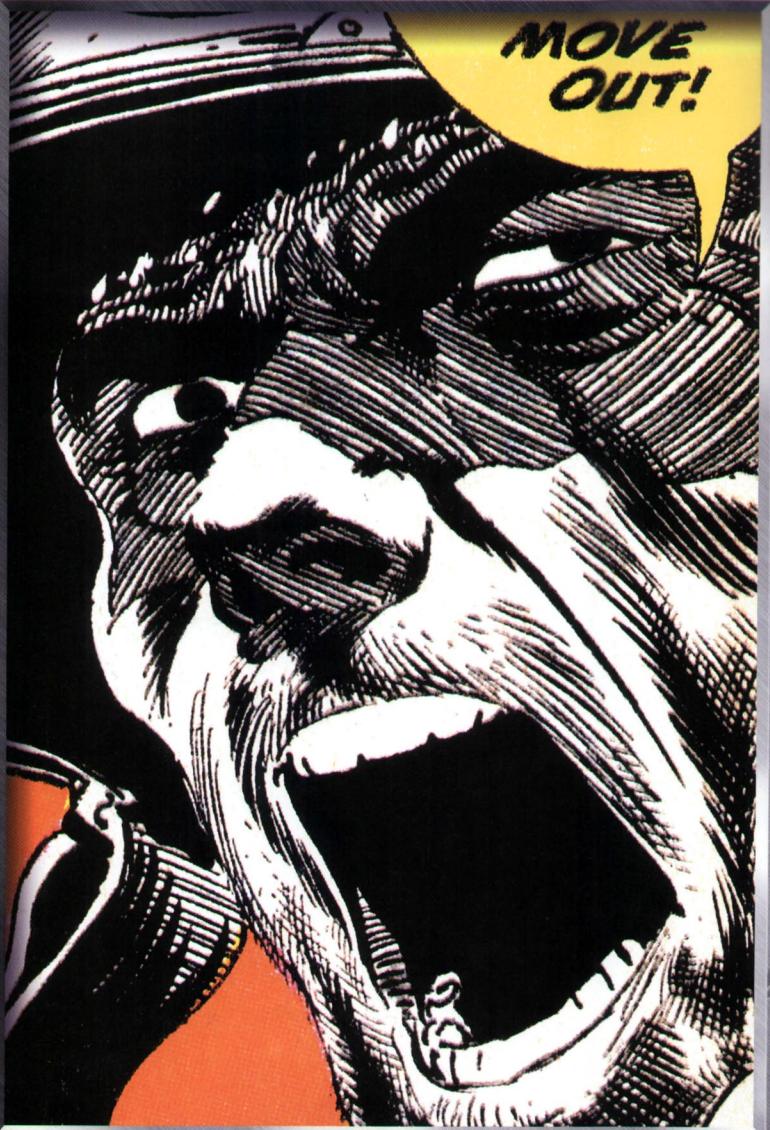
Right page:
Panel from the
cover of Marvel's
Captain Marvel #17, Oct. 1969,
inked by Gene
Adams. "Those
three or four
Captain Marvels
with Marvels ink
[Kane] recalled, "were far
superior at that
point to anything
I had done."²⁶

"THAT'S WHAT I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO BRING TO COMICS -- THE COMBINATION OF THE INTERNALIZATION OF CHARACTERS THAT PROSE CAN IMPLY, AND THE EXCITEMENT THAT PICTURES CAN SHOW I WANT TO AFFECT THE READER IN THE SAME WAY THAT I HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY ART IN THE PAST."²⁷

"MY WHOLE LIFE IS A FIGHT TO CONTROL AND DIRECT MY EMOTIONS TO GET AS MUCH OUT OF THEM AS POSSIBLE. IN ORDER TO DO THAT I USE THE FACILITIES OF COMICS, NOT AS ENDS IN THEMSELVES, BUT AS TOOLS."²⁸

"THE ONLY THING I WANTED TO EXPRESS ESSENTIALLY WAS THE SENTIMENTAL FALL WITH GRACE AND POWER, AND I TRIED TO DO THAT WITH EVERY DRAWING I EVER DID."²⁹





Along with his contemporaries, Carmine Infantino and Gil Kane, Joe Kubert entered the comic book field in the 1940s as a teenager, drawing for DC Comics, then went on to become one of the giants of the medium, an artist whose style is unmistakable -- and unforgettable. The most expressive pen-and-brush comic book artist of his generation, Kubert's name and style became synonymous with war comics during the Silver Age because of years of service drawing World War II's heroic American *Sgt. Rock*, and then later, the offbeat *Anthero*, World War I German flyer *Enemy Ace*. Both became signature characters. Kubert's gritty pen line and bold brushwork perfectly suited writer and editor Bob Kanigher's emotionally wrenching writing. "Some people have asked me if the war stuff was material I especially liked doing," Kubert said, "and my answer has been no, it wasn't. Bob had an opening. He needed war stories, and he asked me if I could do it. I said sure, give me any subject matter and I'll draw it. It wasn't because I had any particular feeling for it -- I put as much effort into doing it as I would in any kind of story."

Even superhero stories, in the early 1960s, Kubert maintained continuity with his 1940s roots by returning to *Hawkman*, a character rendered by many artists since, but given his most definitive treatment by Kubert. Despite a brief run of only six issues, what accounts for Kubert's lasting popularity and legend-in-his-own-time status? "I happen to love to draw, and I happen to love to draw comic books. I enjoy it as much now, probably more, than I did before."

Opposite page: Kubert's icon, *Sgt. Rock*, from *Our Army at War* #207, Jun. 1969.

This page: Model sheet for Hawkman & Hawkgirl, circa 1960.

Joe Kubert



"ONE OF THE TURNING POINTS IN MY CAREER CAME IN THE YEAR 1945, WHEN SHELDON MAYER, THEN EDITOR OF *FLASH COMICS*, GAVE ME THE CHANCE TO DRAW THE *HWKMAN STRIP*!" KUBERT WROTE IN THE LETTER COLUMN OF THE MAY, 1961 ISSUE OF DC'S *Brave & Bold* TITLE THAT BROUGHT HWKMAN INTO THE SILVER AGE.

"ANY OF YOU WHO HAVE READ AND ENJOYED HWKMAN VINTAGE 1945 CAN IMAGINE THE THRILL AND SATISFACTION I DERIVED COMING BACK TO THE CHARACTER HELLO TO AN OLD FRIEND, WHO, RATHER THAN AGING DURING THE PAST YEARS, HAS GROWN YOUNGER, STRONGER, AND MORE ADVENTURE SOME THAN EVER!"¹ LIKE KUBERT'S STYLE ITSELF, WHICH WENT FROM ONE TYPICAL OF MANY GOLDEN AGE COMIC BOOK ARTISTS ("THE DISTORTIONS AND THE BAD DRAWING," KUBERT SAID IN 2003), TO ONE OF THE MOST DISTINGUISHABLE STYLES IN THE HISTORY OF COMIC BOOK ART.

Upper left: Flash Comics #71, May 1946.

Center: *Brave & Bold* #36, Jul. 1961.

Below: *Brave & Bold* #42, Jul. 1962.

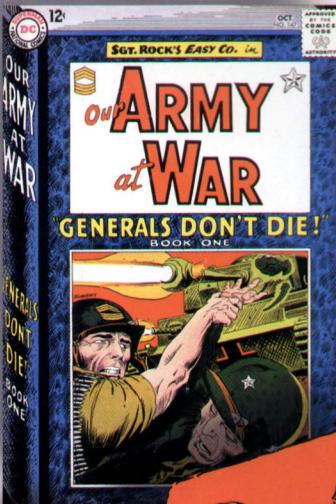
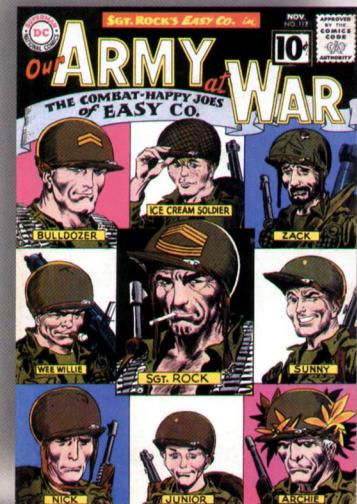


Wrote Kubert, "I believe Hawkman will benefit from my experience of two decades in the comic book business. I feel I can apply things I couldn't even visualize 15 years ago," in black and white, like these silhouetted panels (above and below, from *Brave & Bold* #34, Mar. 1961), or color, like the cover (left, *Brave & Bold* #44, Nov. 1962) done in wash. "I did the wash; what Jack Adler [DC colorist] did was retain that effect by being able to reproduce it at a cost that made it viable to put out."



"ALL THIS WORK IS NOT THE PRODUCT OF ONE PERSON AT ALL," KUBERT SAID. "(SGT. ROCK) WAS STRICTLY BOB KANIGHER'S IDEA TO BEGIN WITH, AND ALL I WAS DOING WAS ILLUSTRATING SOME VERY EXCELLENT STORIES."

SGT. ROCK OF EASY CO.



"I FELT AS DID BOB THAT ROCK HAD TO BE A VET, WHICH MEANT THAT HE HAD TO BE AN OLDER KIND OF GUY, A FATHER FIGURE TO THOSE WHO CAME IN UNDER HIM. IT'S HARD TO SAY HOW HE WAS DEVELOPED. I DRAW, AS BOB CONTESTS, BY THE SEAT OF MY PANTS. I HAVE TO FEEL THE THING INTUITIVELY."



"I DON'T THINK ROCK'S DEVIATED MUCH BASICALLY, OVER THE YEARS. ROCK IS STILL THE KIND OF GUY WHO FINDS HIMSELF IN UNTEAABLE, UNCOMFORTABLE SITUATIONS... A WAR ATMOSPHERE... WHERE HE HAS TO LOOK OUT FOR HIS 'BOYS' AND HIMSELF. HE DOESN'T LIKE IT, DOESN'T ENJOY KILLING, DOESN'T KILL FOR THE SAKE OF KILLING. IF HE COULD POSSIBLY GET OUT OF IT, HE WOULD, BUT THERE IS THIS MATTER OF A SENSE OF DUTY, RESPONSIBILITY, TERMS THAT I THINK TERMS THAT I THINK SYNONYMOUS."

All Sgt. Rock art appeared in *Our Army at War* comic, written by Bob Kanigher.

Clockwise from upper left:
Cover of issue #298, Sept. 1964. Cover of issue #299, Oct. 1964. Cover of issue #47, Oct. 1964. It's a comic/book; one of many Kubert designs that broke the "Fourth wall" in comic book covers.

Bottom right: Cover of issue #196, Aug. 1968. "Illustrating or writing stories of any other conflict seems not to have the feasibility or credibility that the World War I & II have," Kubert said. "It seems that the most recent wars like Korea or Vietnam are not acceptable reading material. They are just too current, I guess. I can't pin point the reason, but stories were lousy on any book, featuring that material."



"SGT. ROCK IS A HELL OF A LOT MORE OF HIM (KANIGHER) THAN IT IS OF ME... I START WITH A SCRIPT; THE WRITER STARTS WITH AN ABSOLUTELY BLANK PAGE." KANIGHER IS A GREAT WRITER. HE DID SOME STUFF THAT, FOR ME, WAS INSPIRATIONAL."



"**B**OB DID A LOT OF READING AND RESEARCH WORK, ESPECIALLY CONCERNING FLYING AND THE KINDS OF BATTLES THAT TOOK PLACE IN THE AIR. THE TACTICS USED, THE DOGFIGHTS. THAT WAS IMPORTANT, SO THE STORIES WOULD BE CREDIBLE. BOB MUST HAVE HAD A LOT OF FUN FIGURING OUT THE SITUATIONS THE PLANES WOULD BE INVOLVED IN. HOW THE PILOTS FELT, THEIR REACTIONS. AND HE COMMUNICATED THEM TO ME, AND FIRED ME UP."¹¹

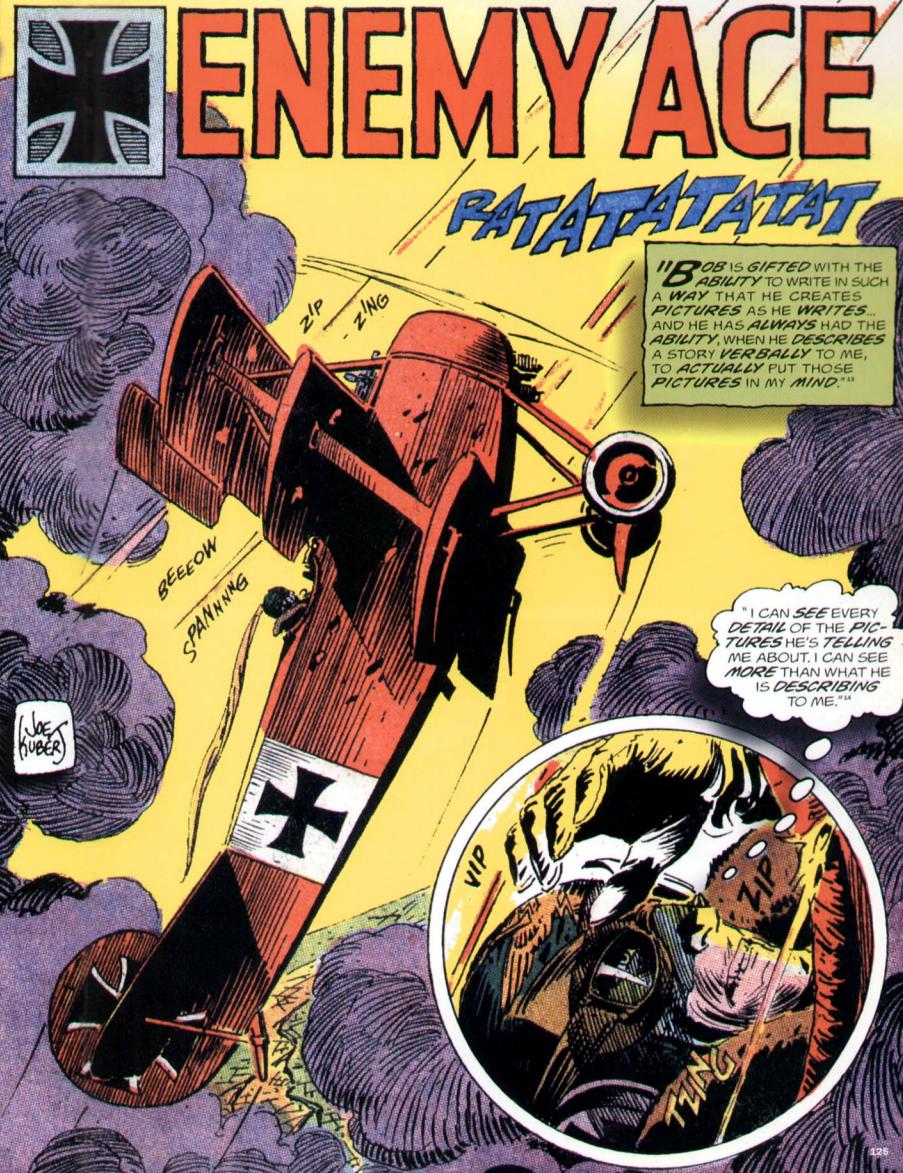
This page: Issue #143, Mar. 1969. "I didn't color any of these. Tatjana Wood was the colorist and she did an absolutely incredible job. Wonderful sense of color, and not only that, but a wonderful sense of what I was trying to do."

"I GOT A LOT OF REFERENCE ON WORLD WAR I AIR WARFARE AND BARON VON RICHTOFEN A.K.A. ENEMY ACE. ON THE AIRPLANES, WHAT I TRIED FOR WAS A FEELING OF WHAT I HAD READ AND SEEN. I READ A GOODLY NUMBER OF HISTORICAL PIECES ON THE REAL RED BARON. I GOT A WHOLE BUNCH OF MATERIAL ON WORLD WAR I PLANES, BOTH CONSTRUCTION AND PERFORMANCE-WISE. I TRIED TO GET A FEEL FOR THESE LITTLE AIRPLANES THAT WERE PUT TOGETHER WITH WOOD AND PAPER AND WIRE AND STRING."¹²

Right page: Splash page of issue #138, May 1968.

"I GOT A LOT OF REFERENCE ON WORLD WAR I AIR WARFARE AND BARON VON RICHTOFEN A.K.A. ENEMY ACE. ON THE AIRPLANES, WHAT I TRIED FOR WAS A FEELING OF WHAT I HAD READ AND SEEN. I READ A GOODLY NUMBER OF HISTORICAL PIECES ON THE REAL RED BARON. I GOT A WHOLE BUNCH OF MATERIAL ON WORLD WAR I PLANES, BOTH CONSTRUCTION AND PERFORMANCE-WISE. I TRIED TO GET A FEEL FOR THESE LITTLE AIRPLANES THAT WERE PUT TOGETHER WITH WOOD AND PAPER AND WIRE AND STRING."¹²

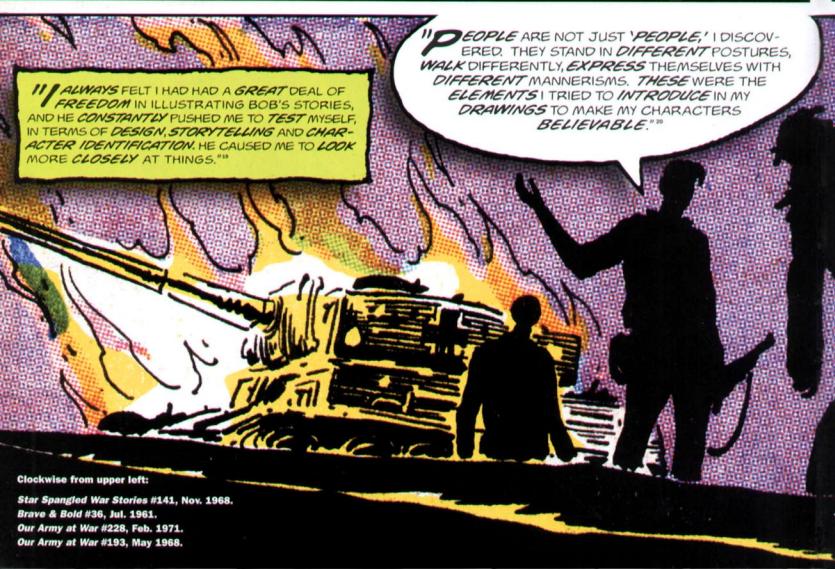
Right page: Splash page of issue #138, May 1968.



"THEY FLEW THOUSANDS OF FEET IN THE AIR, AND THE MEN THAT FLEW THEM WERE JUST INCREDIBLE! THAT'S WHAT I SAW WHEN I READ BOB'S ENEMY ACE. THAT'S WHAT I TRIED TO PUT INTO MY DRAWINGS."¹⁵



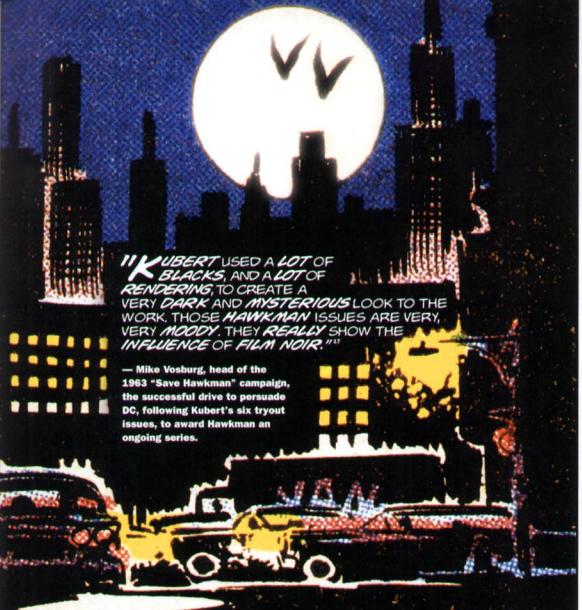
"WORKING WITH BOB KANIGHER WAS A CONSTANT CHALLENGE, AN INVIGORATING, REWARDING CHALLENGE. BOB'S STORIES TURNED AND MOVED ON THE EMOTIONAL ASPECTS OF THE CHARACTERS INVOLVED. THAT, THEN, CAUSED THE ARTIST TO PLUMB THE DEPTHS OF HIS CONCENTRATION TO CREATE A GRAPHIC RESPONSE TO BOB'S TEXT."¹⁶



"PEOPLE ARE NOT JUST 'PEOPLE,' I DISCOVERED. THEY STAND IN DIFFERENT POSTURES, WALK DIFFERENTLY, EXPRESS THEMSELVES WITH DIFFERENT MANNERISMS. THESE WERE THE ELEMENTS I TRIED TO INTRODUCE IN MY DRAWINGS TO MAKE MY CHARACTERS BELIEVABLE."¹⁷



"FROM HIS PEN CAME THE SOUND AND THE FURY, THE LONELINESS, THE EXHAUSTION, THE PITY, AND THE PITILESS, THE POETRY AND THE MUD BLACK AND WHITE MORE ELOQUENT THAN ERUPTING BLOOD. IT WAS A MIRACLE-- CALLED JOE KUBERT."¹⁸
-- BOB KANIGHER



"KUBERT USED A LOT OF BLACKS, AND A LOT OF RENDERING, TO CREATE A VERY DARK AND MYSTERIOUS LOOK TO THE WORK. THOSE HAWKMAN ISSUES ARE VERY, VERY MOODY. THEY REALLY SHOW THE INFLUENCE OF FILM NOIR."¹⁹

— Mike Vosburg, head of the 1963 "Save Hawkman" campaign, the successful drive to persuade DC, following Kubert's six trout issues, to award Hawkman an ongoing series.

"WHEN I WAS DOING GGT, ROCK, I FELT THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO BE ABLE TO ILLUSTRATE THAT CHARACTER SO THAT HE WOULD BE RECOGNIZABLE WITHOUT A TAG HANGING FROM HIS HELMET, SO THAT HE WOULD BE RECOGNIZABLE FROM THE BACK, WALKING AWAY. FOR THAT, THE ARTIST REALLY HAS TO GET TO KNOW THAT CHARACTER AND GIVE THAT CHARACTER A HISTORY AND A LIFE, SO THAT HE CAN FEEL HOW THAT CHARACTER SHOULD MOVE, HOW HE SHOULD LEAN, AND WHAT HIS BODY LANGUAGE WOULD BE."

EVEN THE MOON SEEMS BEAT-SNAGGIN' ITSELF ON THE TREETOPS!



Clockwise from upper left:

Star Spangled War Stories #141, Nov. 1968.

Brave & Bold #36, Jul. 1963.

Our Army at War #228, Feb. 1971.

Our Army at War #193, May 1968.

TIRIED RAYS FILTERED INTO THE SILENT WOODS...



Gene Colan

GENE COLAN LABORED IN THE TRENCHES OF THE COMIC BOOK INDUSTRY FOR YEARS, DRAWING WAR AND ROMANCE COMICS, BUT IT WASN'T UNTIL HIS ARRIVAL AT MARVEL IN 1965, DRAWING THE UNDERWATER HERO PRINCE NAMOR, THE SUB-MARINER, THAT COLAN'S STAR ASCENDED. HIS FIGURES, GRACEFUL YET POWERFUL, WERE PERFECT FOR AN ATHLETIC SWIMMING HERO, AND GAVE THE CHARACTER A REGAL AURA THAT SUITED HIS TITLE. ALONG WITH HIS CONTEMPORARIES, JOHN BUSCEMA AND JOHN ROMITA, COLAN WAS ONE OF THE FIRST MARVEL ARTISTS TO BREAK AWAY FROM THE KIRBY LOOK (BUT ONLY AFTER FIRST ASSIMILATING HIS DYNAMICS INTO THEIR OWN) WHICH WAS THE COMPANY'S DE FACTO HOUSE STYLE DURING THE SILVER AGE.

ORIGINALY DESIGNED BY KIRBY AS A BULKY GOLDEN ROBOT, REDESIGNED BY STEVE DITKO WITH THE NOW-FAMILIAR RED AND GOLD ARMOR, AND ILLUSTRATED BY OTHER MARVEL ARTISTS LIKE DON HECK, MARVEL'S IRON MAN WAS GIVEN TO COLAN IN 1966. COLAN COMMENTED, "THE ONLY PROBLEM I HAD IN THE BEGINNING WAS GETTING AN EXPRESSION ON HIS FACE. I WANTED THE READER TO FEEL HIS EMOTION AT TIMES, NOT JUST BE A METAL FIGURE ALWAYS LOOKING THE SAME. SO I TOOK SOME POETIC LICENSE. I TRIED NOT TO OVERDO IT -- AFTER ALL, IT IS MADE OF METAL. I TRIED TO BE VERY SUBTLE WITH IT, ADD A LITTLE HUMANITY TO THE FACE." BY TURNING THE CHARACTER'S MUTE HELMET INTO A MASK OF TRAGEDY, IMBUING HIM WITH THE PATHOS OF A MAN TRAPPED IN A PRISON OF ARMOR, COLAN FOREVER OWNED IRON MAN.

THIS QUALITY OF BRINGING TO SUPERHEROES A REALISTIC, HUMAN SIDE MADE COLAN PERFECT FOR THE NASCENT MARVEL STYLE OF HEROIC -- YET SOMEWHAT TRAGIC -- PROTAGONISTS. THE BLIND HERO DAREDEVIL AFTER A ROUND-ROBIN OF ARTISTS, BLOSSOMED UNDER COLAN'S STEWARDSHIP BECAUSE COLAN CONVINCINGLY DEPICTED THE SWASH-BUCKLING SIDE OF THE CHARACTER AS WELL AS HIS CIVILIAN ALTER EGO.

AND THOUGH COLAN TOO, LIKE ROMITA, HAD TO FOLLOW DITKO -- BUT ON DR. STRANGE, DITKO'S OTHER FLAGSHIP CREATION -- COLAN WAS NOT INTIMIDATED. HIS STRANGE STORIES, DRAWN IN CHIAROSCURO SHADINGS, WITH PANEL LAYOUTS AND COMPOSITIONS THAT WENDED AND WARPED THEIR WAY THROUGH THE PAGE, BEFITTED THE ECTOPLASMIC, OTHERWORLDLY DIMENSIONS THEY WERE SET IN. THAT HIS VISION OF THE OCCULT CHARACTER HOLDS ITS OWN AGAINST DITKO'S TO THIS DAY IS A TESTAMENT TO COLAN'S ATMOSPHERIC STYLE, ONE OF THE MOST UNIQUE IN THE HISTORY OF COMIC BOOK ART.



Splash (no pun intended) page from Colan's first issue, Tales to Astonish #70, Aug. 1965, written by Stan Lee, inked by Vince Colletta.

Background: Detail from Colan's first cover, Tales to Astonish #71, Sep. 1965, inked by Colletta. Colan said, "The thing I didn't care about was the underwater city of Atlantis. It's sort of science fiction, and I never thought that science fiction was my cup of tea."



Detail from the cover of Tales of Suspense #79, Jul. 1966, inked by Jack Abel.



"I THINK DAREDEVIL WAS MY FAVORITE STRIP... IT WAS A GOOD TRAINING GROUND."

"I WANTED THE READER TO FEEL THE HEIGHT TO BEGIN WITH... BUT THE ACROBATICS WERE ALWAYS HARD TO FIGURE OUT. I TRIED NOT TO REPEAT MYSELF."

"I RELY UPON [REFERENCES] TO HELP ME ON THE ANATOMY. WHEN I'VE SEEN FILMS OF ACROBATICS AT A CIRCUS FLIPPING FROM ONE THING TO ANOTHER, I TRY TO REMEMBER WHAT I'VE SEEN."

"I TRY TO BLUR THE SCENE VERY OFTEN. I STILL HAVE SPEED-LINES, BUT... THE DRAWING HAS A BLURRED LOOK... THE TRAIL OF THE IMAGE BEHIND IT SEVERAL TIMES."

"I REMEMBER I WANTED TO CHANGE HIS COSTUME TO MAKE IT BLACK, JUST WITH LITTLE SPOTS OF RED SHOWING THROUGH IT, BUT STAN WANTED ME TO LEAVE IT OPEN FOR COLOR, WHICH I THOUGHT LOST THE DYNAMICS OF THE CHARACTER... MADE HIM LOOK ALMOST WEIGHTLESS."

"I TRIED TO GET THAT MOVEMENT INTO IT. NOT JUST SHOW ONE FIGURE SOMERSAULTING WITH SPEED LINES BEHIND --

-- BUT MULTIPLE IMAGES OF HIM, LIKE A CAMERA MIGHT CAPTURE HIM."

"I HAVE A COLLECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE BODY, LIKE DIVERS DIVING OFF A PLATFORM -- YOU KNOW THEY TWIST AND THEY TURN UNTIL THEY HIT THE WATER. THE KIND OF THING THAT DAREDEVIL MIGHT DO."

"I LOVED DOING DAREDEVIL. I DID HIM THE LONGEST; I MADE HIM MY OWN. IT WAS A GREAT MARRIAGE BETWEEN THE CHARACTER AND MYSELF."

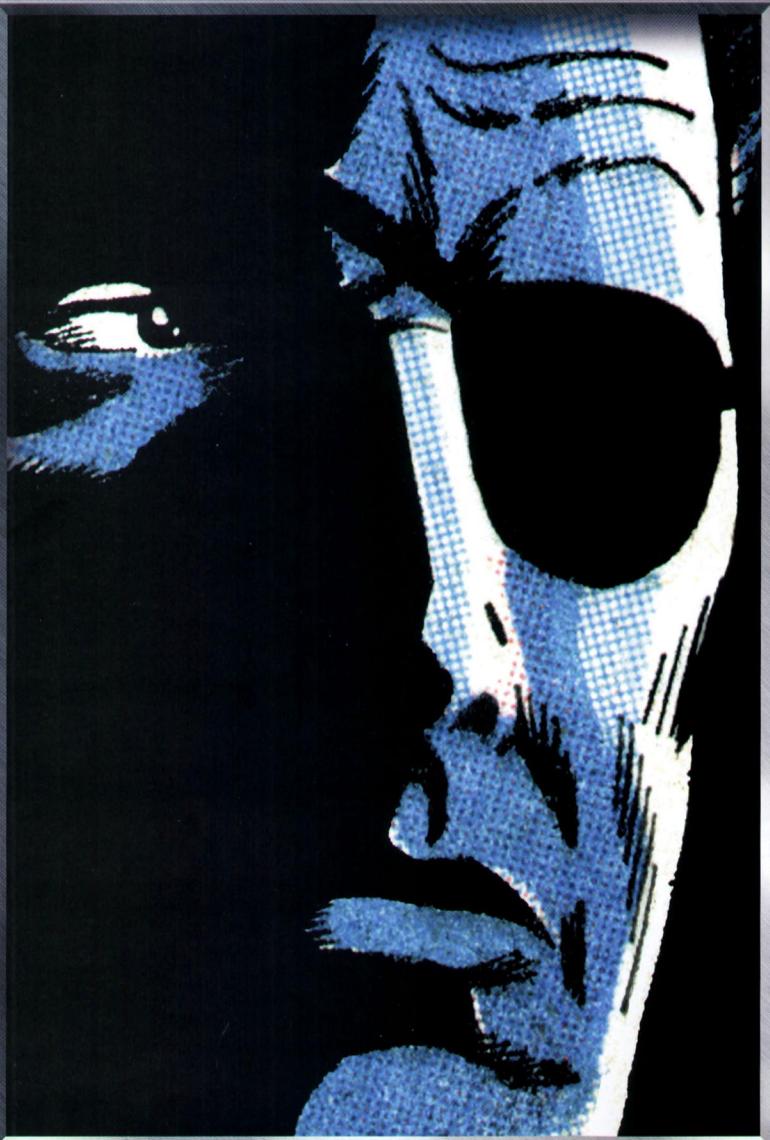
This page, above:
Daredevil #41, Jun. 1968, inked by John Tartaglione. This page, below:
Daredevil #60, 1965, inked by Colletta. Center figures: Splash page from Daredevil #26, Mar. 1967, inker uncredited. Opposite page, above: Daredevil #27, Apr. 1967, inked by Tartaglione. Opposite page, below: Detail from the cover of Daredevil #25, Feb. 1967, inked by Frank Giacoia.



"I TRULY BELIEVE THE HANDFUL OF ISSUES OF DR. STRANGE THAT GENE AND I TURNED OUT IN 1968-69 TO BE ONE OF A MERE HANDFUL OF PERIODS WHEN THE MASTER OF THE MYSTIC ARTS WAS AT AN ALL-TIME ARTISTIC PEAK."²³

—Roy Thomas, writer/associate editor





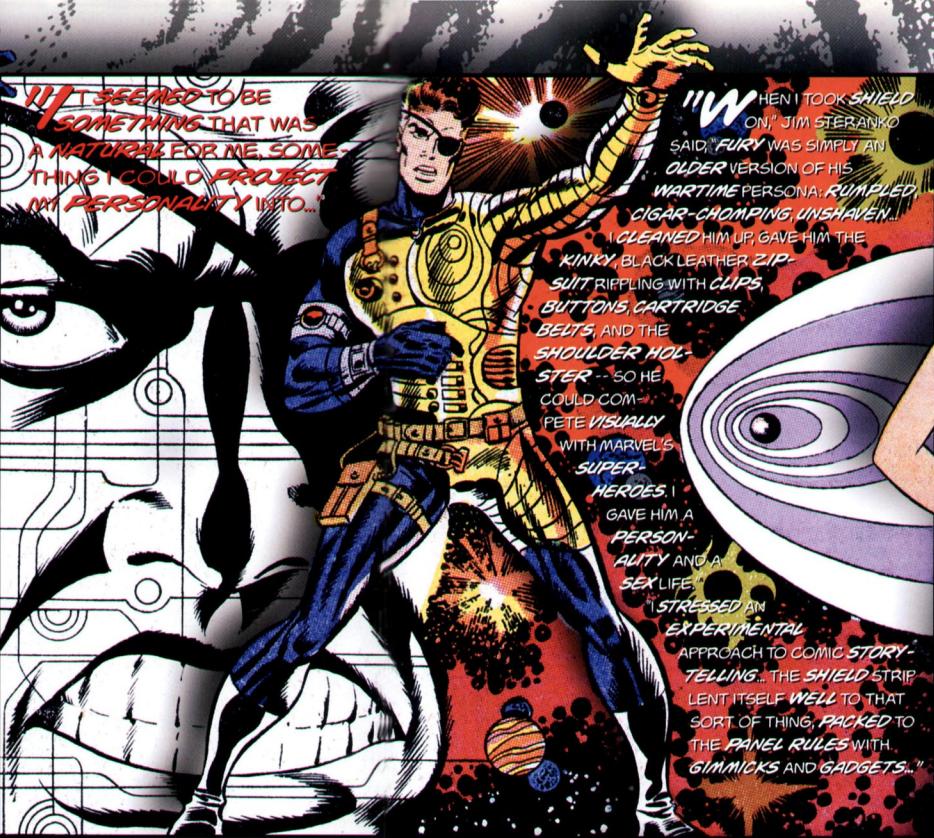
STERANKO

JIM STERANKO HAS WORN MANY HATS IN HIS CAREER -- ARTIST, AUTHOR, ILLUSTRATOR, ART DIRECTOR, DESIGNER, ENTERTAINER -- BUT HE WORE THEM ALL AT ONCE WHEN HE PUT ON QUITE A SHOW AT MARVEL COMICS AT THE END OF THE SILVER AGE. IT BEGAN IN 1966 WHEN, AS A VIRTUAL UNKNOWN, HE WAS HANDED COMPLETE CONTROL OF A SECOND-STRING CHARACTER FROM KIRBY, THE JAMES BOND-KNOCKOFF NICK FURY, AGENT OF SHIELD. HE PROMPTLY USED FURY AS AN UNLIKELY LAUNCHING PAD FOR HIS TRULY METEORIC RISE TO PROMINENCE.

STERANKO INVESTED THE *B*-FEATURE WITH A STARTLING ARRAY OF CINEMATIC AND STAGE STORYTELLING TECHNIQUES, WEDDED TO THE ASCENDANT KIRBY/MARVEL STYLE OF IN-YOUR-FACE POWER. THE COMBINATION WAS AN EXPLOSION OF ALCHEMICAL PROPORTIONS, AND IT BLEW THE FIELD WIDE OPEN. EACH ISSUE, INDEED, EACH PAGE OF STERANKO'S MARVEL WORKS -- INCLUDING A STUNNING TRILOGY OF CAPTAIN AMERICA STORIES -- WAS A SUPERCHARGED SURPRISE, AS STERANKO RELENTLESSLY, ICONOCLASTICALLY EXPERIMENTED WITH MIXED MEDIA APPLICATIONS, FUSING A GRAPHIC DESIGNER'S WITH AN ILLUSTRATOR'S APPROACH TO THE MEDIUM OF SEQUENTIAL STORYTELLING.

STERANKO WROTE HIS OWN MATERIAL AS WELL. WHEN HIS ARTWORK AND HIS STORIES APPEARED IN MARVEL COMICS, STAN LEE SAID OF STERANKO, "IT WAS LIKE HE BURST ON THE SCENE LIKE A SKYROCKET! HE WAS IMMEDIATELY THE CENTER OF ATTENTION OF ARTISTS AND WRITERS, AND THE FANS ALIKE."¹ JIM STERANKO, SUPERSTAR. HE CAME, SAW, AND CONQUERED. BY 1970, HE HAD LEFT THE MAINSTREAM COMIC BOOK WORLD TO CONQUER OTHERS.

HIS INFLUENCE ON THE FIELD TODAY IS IN CONVERSE PROPORTION TO THE RELATIVELY SMALL BODY OF WORK HE PRODUCED FOR MARVEL COMICS BETWEEN 1966 AND 1970. LOOKING BACK ON THAT WORK, STERANKO REMARKED, SOMEWHAT RHETORICALLY, "AFTER YOUR FIFTY OR SIXTY YEARS ARE UP, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO LOOK BACK AND SEE THIS OUTPUT THAT YOU'VE DONE, THAT WILL ENDURE LONG AFTER YOU'RE GONE, AND WILL CONTINUE TO FILL THE MINDS OF MILLIONS OF PEOPLE."²



Insets above: The Richard Avedon-inspired psychedelic portrait of arch-villain Scopio, from SHIELD #5, Oct. 1968, inked by John Tartaglione. Figure, far left: Strange Tales #166, Mar. 1968, inked by Joe Sinnott. Figure, right: Val, Fury's love interest from Strange Tales #168, May 1968, inked by Sinnott. Background: SHIELD #1, Jun. 1968, inked by Sinnott.

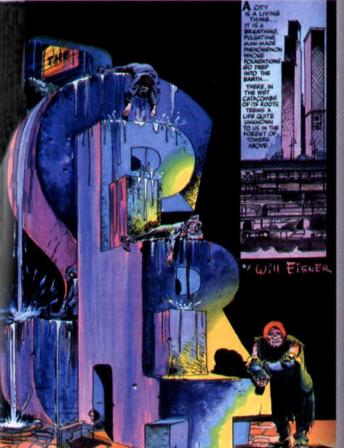
"MY STUFF CAME OUT LOOKING NOT LIKE A MARVEL BOOK, NOT IN THE MARVEL FORMULA, BUT IN MY OWN WAY."



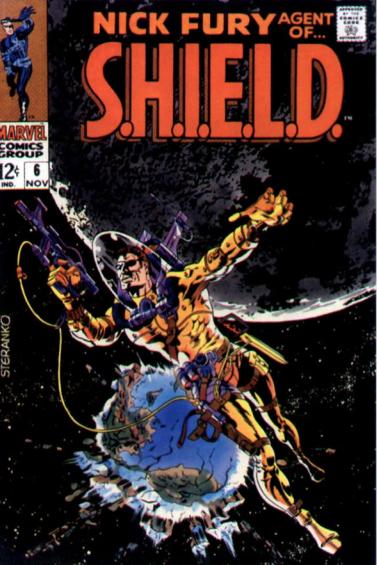
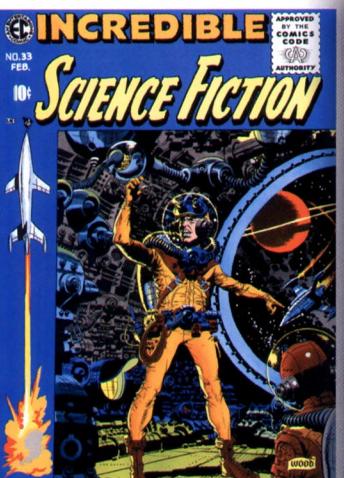
Below: Splash page to *The Spirit*, July 13, 1947, "Fairy Tales for Delinquents." Right: Splash page to "Dark Moon Rise, Hell Hound Kill!" in *SHIELD* #3, Aug. 1968, inked by Dan Adkins.



Architecture. Below: Splash page to *The Spirit*, Feb. 22, 1948. Right: *SHIELD* #1, Jun. 1968. Of his *SHIELD* run Steranko said, "I tried to make every one of them different... every one of the *SHIELD* books was going to take on a different problem, completely different than the other ones."¹¹



STERANKO'S BREAKTHROUGH IMPACT CAN BE PARTLY ATTRIBUTED TO HIS RESURRECTING GRAPHIC DESIGNS AND DEVICES FROM THE PRIMER OF COMIC BOOK STORY-TELLING, WILL EISNER'S MASTERPIECE, *THE SPIRIT* (1940-62). LESSONS THAT, BY 1968, HAD LARGELY BEEN FORGOTTEN BY THE MAINSTREAM. EISNER SAID OF STERANKO, "I DISCOVERED WE HAD A SOMEWHAT PARALLEL PHILOSOPHY ABOUT THE COMIC MEDIUM. WE BOTH HAVE A RESPECT FOR THE ROLE OF ART IN THE NARRATIVE PROCESS."¹²



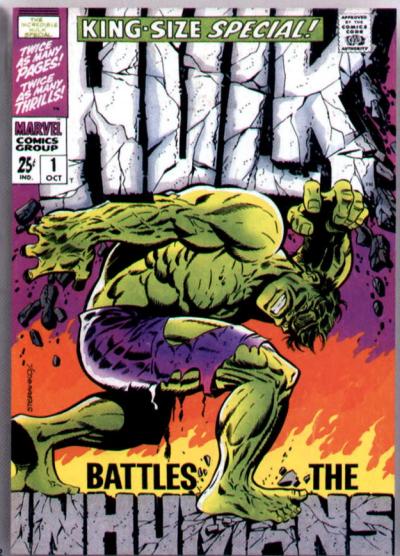
Above: Splash page to *The Spirit*, Jun. 6, 1948, "The Guilty Gun." Right: Splash page to *SHIELD* #5, Oct. 1968, inked by John Tartaglione. Steranko said, "Even if the title is 'Whatever Happened to Scorpio?' there are things in that story that bear my own philosophies out."¹³

Mechanics: Above: EC's *Incredible Science Fiction* #12, May 1954, by Wally Wood, one of Steranko's art heroes, to whom he paid homage with his cover (right) to *SHIELD* #6, Nov. 1968.

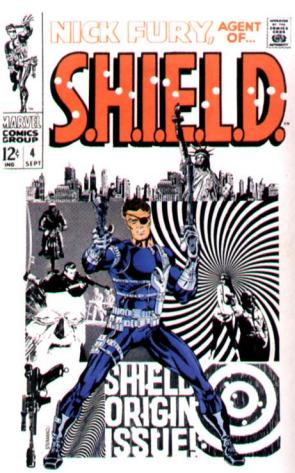
Steranko: "...my own personal philosophy of the human figure, the same code that guides my efforts through every artistic endeavor...the heroic ideal¹³...The phrase refers to my aesthetic attitude of the figure..."



Top: Groundbreaking quadrupie-page spread from *Strangelove*, sales #167, Apr. 1968, inked by Sinnott.



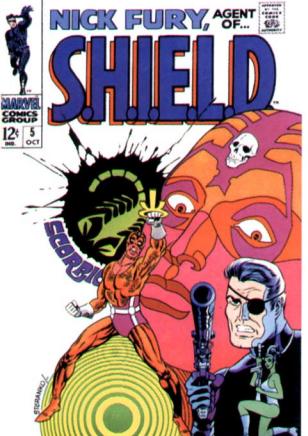
Above: What Steranko called "My most outrageous violation of human anatomy": the double-page spread from Captain America #111, Mar. 1969, inked by Joe Sinnott. **Left:** The Marvellous classic: The Incredible Hulk Special #1, Oct. 1968, head redrawn by John Romita. **Right:** SHIELD #2, Jul. 1968. "I rewrote the Bible in the second issue," The Evolution Island."*



Above: SHIELD #4, Sep. 1968.

"I INTRODUCED PSYCHEDELIC ART TO MAINSTREAM COMICS, EXPERIMENTED WITH SURREALISTIC PASSAGES, EMPHASIZED TYPOGRAPHIC ELEMENTS ON PAGES, STRESSED A GRAPHIC DESIGN APPROACH -- ESPECIALLY WITH COVERS -- THAT WAS MISSING FROM COMICS AT THE TIME, AND USED ILLUSTRATION TECHNIQUES TO ENHANCE THE KINETIC DRAMA INHERENT IN THE FORM."¹¹

Below: SHIELD #5, Oct. 1968.



"IF REALITY CAN BE SYMBOLIZED BY COLOR, THEN THE UNREALITY OF MEMORY CAN BE EXPRESSED BY NO COLOR."¹²



Top: From Captain America #113, May 1969,
inked by Tom Palmer.

Above: Captain America #111, Mar. 1969,
inked by Joe Sinnott.

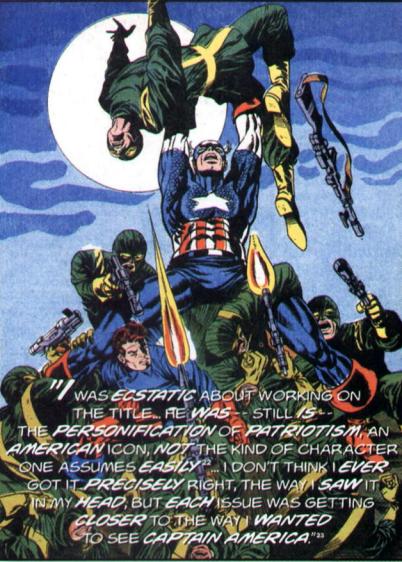
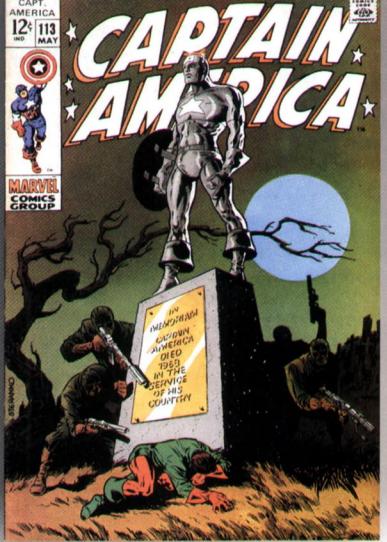


Strange Tales #167, Apr. 1968.

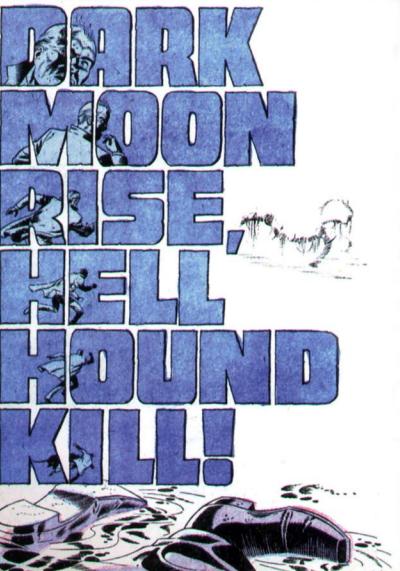
"I HAD WANTED TO DO CAPTAIN AMERICA A WHOLE LIFETIME, BECAUSE I GREW UP WITH COMICS IN THE FORTIES. IT WAS A LIFETIME AMBITION OF MINE TO DO THAT STRIP.¹³ "THE PREVAILING MENTALITY HAD MARINELIZED HIM INTO AN EMBARRASSINGLY STALE POSITION, AND, FROM MY VIEWPOINT, NOBODY THERE KNEW WHAT TO DO WITH HIM. MY TRILOGY WAS AIMED AT REPOSITIONING CAP THEMATICALLY INTO AN AREA THAT BELONGED TO HIM."¹⁴

Strange Tales #167, Apr. 1968.

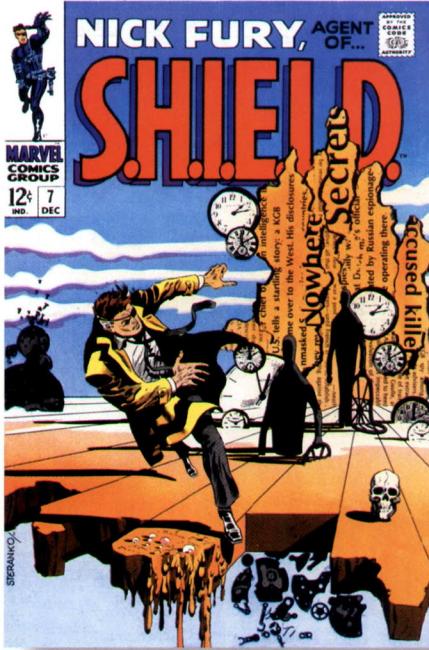




Above, left to right: Cover, double-page spread and full-page from Captain America #113, May 1969, inked by Tom Palmer.



POP SURREALISM RUNS LIKE A THREAD THROUGH STERANKO'S SILVER AGE WORK, WITH 1968'S SHIELD COVER AND 1969'S CAPTAIN AMERICA INTERIORS THE MOST PROMINENT EXAMPLES.

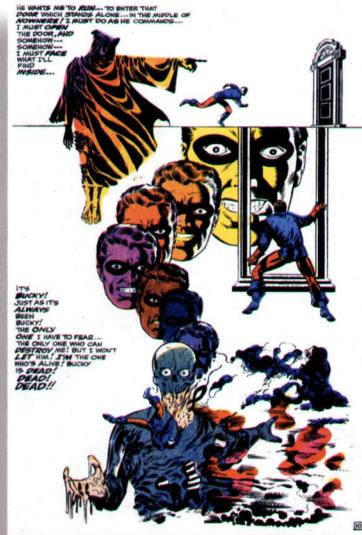


Above: SHIELD #7, Dec. 1968. Center and opposite above: Two consecutive pages from Captain America #111, Mar. 1969, inked by Joe Sinnott.

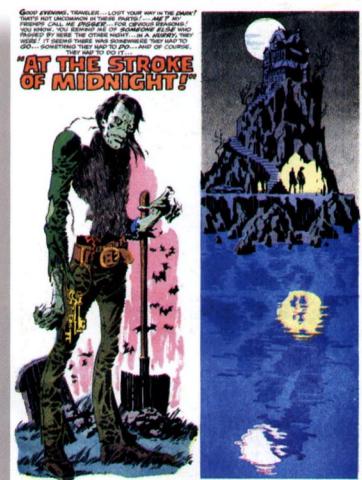


"I DOUBT IF THERE WAS A MORE SUBVERSIVE CREATOR IN OVERGROUND COMICS... BUT I CHANGED THE RULES BECAUSE COMICS HAD BECOME APATHETIC AND HAD THE STINK OF DECAY ON THEM. 'WHAT I ATTACKED WERE MOLDERING, BRITTLE, AND FATIGUED ANACHRONISMS THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN HACKED AWAY YEARS BEFORE I GOT THERE, AND I DIDN'T EXCISE ANYTHING UNLESS I HAD A POSITIVE SOLUTION IN PLACE."²⁵

"I DON'T THINK I WANT TO SPREAD MY INTEREST OUT, FRAGMENT MY ATTENTION ON TWO OR THREE DIFFERENT STRIPS," STERANKO SAID. "I WANTED TO THINK ABOUT ONE, AND REALLY GET IT RIGHT, WORK ON IT, AND MAKE IT A MASTERSPIECE."²⁷



"GOOD OR BAD, I BROUGHT A VOLLEY OF NEW IDEAS TO THE FORM AND THOSE IDEAS OPENED THE DOOR FOR OTHERS..."²⁸



"MAYBE BECAUSE I GREW UP READING COMICS, I WAS ALWAYS LESS REALISTIC THAN MOST PEOPLE," STERANKO SAID. "I'M KIND OF A DREAMER, I'M STILL A DREAMER. I LIVE IN MY OWN WORLD..."²⁹



Right: Splash page to the short story "At the Stroke of Midnight," Tower of Shadows #1, Sep. 1969. This was the culmination of Steranko's Silver Age experiments, and the model for all his future work. He focused on intense investigation and reinterpretation of a single genre at a time. "I'd like to do one of everything, to focus my thoughts upon every dramatic situation."³⁰



NEAL ADAMS

THE BODY OF WORK NEAL ADAMS PRODUCED NEAR THE END OF THE SILVER AGE CAUSED SOMETHING AKIN TO A REVOLUTION IN THE MEDIUM. DURING THIS PERIOD, WHICH STRADDLED THE 1960s AND 1970s, ADAMS FORGED DEFINITIVE ARTISTIC IDENTITIES FOR SEVERAL LEADING CHARACTERS, WHILE HIS RENDITIONS OF PRACTICALLY EVERY DC COMIC CHARACTER AND GENRE ON HUNDREDS OF COVERS EFFECTIVELY GAVE THE COMPANY ITS ONLY BULWARK AGAINST MARVEL'S ARTISTIC HEGEMONY OF JACK KIRBY (AND LATER, JIM STERANKO).

IF KIRBY'S APPROACH WAS THE ULTIMATE IN LARGER-THAN-LIFE, STYLIZED EXAGGERATION, ADAMS WAS THE OPPOSITE: A UNIQUE BLEND OF DYNAMIC ANATOMY AND PHOTOGRAPHIC REALISM THAT MADE THE FANTASY WORLD OF SUPERHEROES VISUALLY BELIEVABLE IN WAYS NEVER BEFORE SEEN.

ADAMS' AUDACIOUS COMMAND OF ANATOMICAL PERSPECTIVE AND FORESHORTENING ALLOWED HIS HEROES TO WALK, RUN, LEAP AND FLY IN SMOOTH, FLOWING MOVEMENTS THAT BELEW THEIR SUPERHUMAN BULK. CARTOONY, STOCK EXPRESSIONS WERE REPLACED WITH A FULL RANGE OF HUMAN EMOTIONS. ADAMS' PEN-AND-BRUSH INKING STYLE -- HONED DURING HIS YEARS SPENT DRAWING A BLACK AND WHITE NEWSPAPER STRIP -- SET NEW STANDARDS FOR THE DELINEATION OF LIGHT AND SHADOW, MAKING ADAMS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL PEN AND INK ARTIST SINCE MILTON (TERRY & THE PIRATES/STEVE CANYON) CANIFF. PAGE LAYOUTS, COMPOSITIONS AND PANEL SEQUENCES WERE AS BREATHTAKING AS THEY WERE RISK-TAKING, KEEPING ADAMS APACE WITH HIS CONTEMPORARY STERANKO.

THE CUMULATIVE EFFECT OF ADAMS' WORK SIGNALED A SEA CHANGE IN THE LOOK OF COMIC BOOK ART ITSELF. HIS VISUAL ACUITY ENABLED HIS WRITER COLLABORATORS TO BREAK NEW GROUND TELLING THE KINDS OF STORIES THAT COULD BE TOLD IN COMIC BOOKS, AND IN DOING SO, INFLUENCED AN ENTIRE GENERATION OF ARTISTS, OPENING THEIR EYES TO THE POTENTIALS OF THE MEDIUM.

FOR ADAMS OCCUPIES A UNIQUE PLACE AT THE CROSSROADS OF COMIC BOOK HISTORY: PERHAPS MORE THAN ANY OTHER ARTIST, HIS WORK IS THE BRIDGE BETWEEN THE END OF THE SILVER AGE AND, WITH ITS DIVERSE PLETHORA OF GRAPHIC STYLES, TODAY'S MODERN AGE OF COMIC BOOK ART.

"AN INNOVATOR IN SEVERAL WAYS, NEAL ADAMS,
JUGGLING INCESSANTLY WITH HIS PICTURES TO STRIKING EFFECT,
REMAINS THE MASTER OF NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE."¹

—Graphic, 1972

"THE QUESTION IS, WHAT IS GREAT ART? IS GREAT ART BEAUTIFUL DRAWINGS, OR IS GREAT ART ART THAT TELLS A STORY WELL? IN A COMIC BOOK, THE GOAL IS THE STORY."

— Neal Adams, 1996

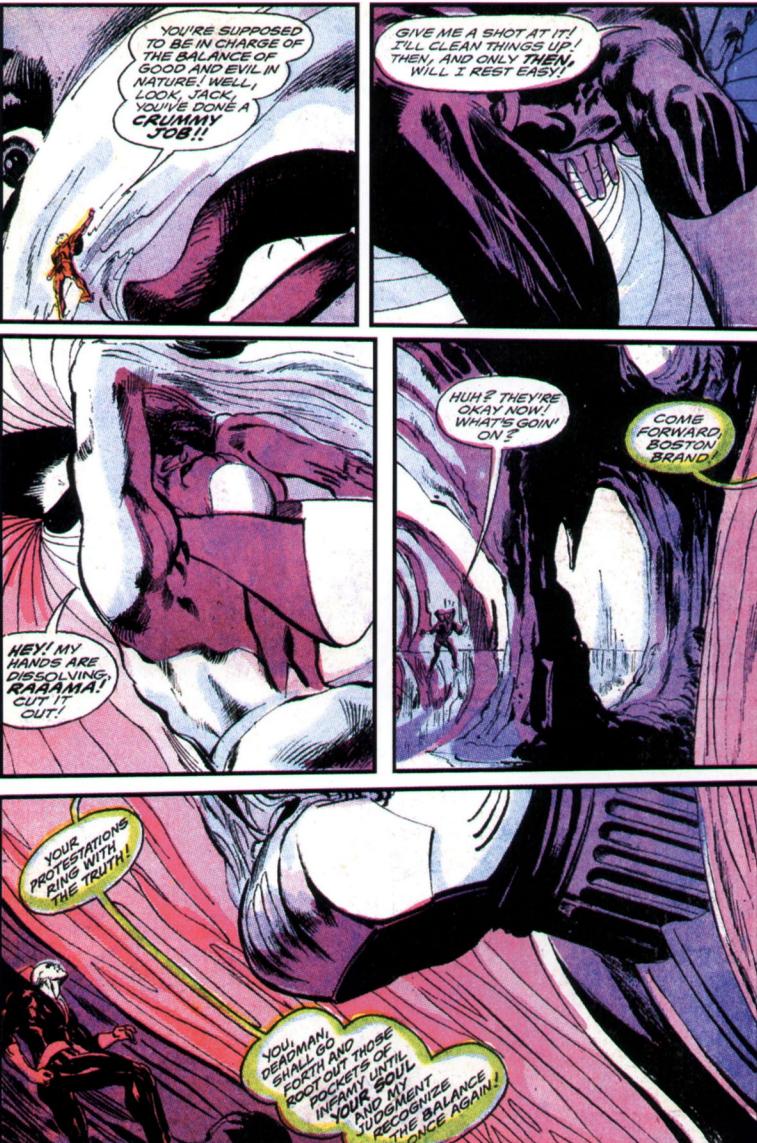
In 1962, at the age of twenty-one, Adams was awarded the assignment to draw a daily and Sunday newspaper comic strip based on the *Ben Casey* television series (ABC-TV, 1962-66) -- the youngest artist to achieve that distinction in comic strip history. When the show ended, so did the strip, and Adams moved on...

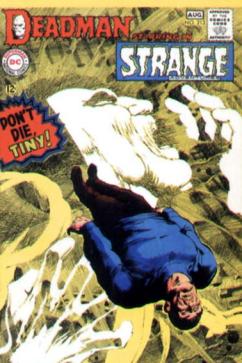


After a detour into commercial illustration, Adams entered the comic book field, first at Warren Magazines doing black and white work. Then, in 1967, Adams arrived at DC Comics, the lumbering, slumbering industry giant reeling from *Underdog* Marvel's success.

After a handful of *Comedy* and *War* backup stories, Adams received two similar superhero features almost at once, following in the footsteps of two silver age legends: *Murphy Anderson on the Spectre*, which Adams would only draw briefly, and *Carmine Infantino, who had just been made DC's editorial director, on Deadman...* The feature that would make Adams' comic book career.

But it was precisely his comic strip background -- and, prior to that, comic book-styled advertising illustration experience -- that gave Adams the tools with which he built his legend. "For three and a half years, I had been drawing daily strips three panels across, which was very constricting," said Adams. "Suddenly the opportunity to design a comic book page was available to me, and I just blasted out. The freedom was incredible."





By 1967, the comic book audience had accepted as "realistic" the Marvel superheroes, with their neurotic naturalism. But they were still drawn in varying degrees of cartoonishness, depending on each artist's level of realistic draftsmanship. The stark, human emotions Deadman exhibited, rendered almost photo-realistically by Adams, raised the bar higher than any comic book artist had been able to reach.

The idea of taking photographs and turning them into drawings was to learn the humanity of the characters. I had taken photographs for Ben Casey because realistic strips required tremendous amounts of soap opera and facial expressions, and I could afford to, because I had the time and the money. But, when I did comic books I had no choice but to work without photographs and, in a way, it was like learning a new skill, exercising muscles I hadn't used enough yet.

"I had worked from photographs so much I'd be able to draw the person inside, so the reader would respond to the face and expression as though somebody was in there. Suddenly it wasn't just a drawing on a page. It was a person, and when that person you cared about suddenly felt anguish, you felt it along with them."

All art from Strange Adventures comic.

Clockwise from top left:
1. Issue #208, Jan. 1968.
2. Issue #213, Aug. 1968.
3. Issue #215, Dec. 1968.
4 & 5. Issues #216, Feb. 1969.
6. Issue #212, Jan. 1968.
7. Aquaman #52, Aug. 1970.
Background: Sketch for Shel Dorf, circa 1967.



"Some of the most important stuff that you can do in comic books has little to do with superheroes being superheroes, and more to do with superheroes being human beings. But that, in fact, is what makes comic books good -- that within the framework of the superhero comic book, the humanity comes through."

"I LIVE! I'M ALIVE!"



"People constantly talk about Deadman as though it was the greatest art I ever did, but what they're remembering are the stories they remember waiting for the next issue, but not for the art. For the story they're remembering this driving force to find [Deadman's murderer] the hook that accelerated as the story went on they wanted to know, who was the hook?"



Green Lantern/Green Arrow #83, May 1971.



X-Men #61, Oct. '69, inked by Tom Palmer.



Green Lantern/Green Arrow #76, Apr. 1970.



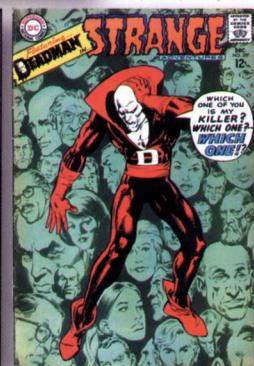
X-Men #61.



Green Lantern/Green Arrow #85, Sep. 1971.



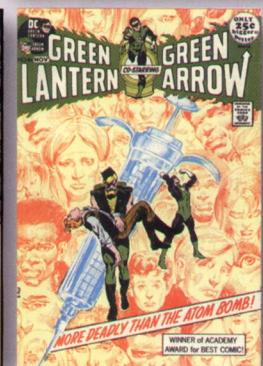
Green Lantern/Green Arrow #85.



Strange Adventures #207, Dec. 1967.



X-Men #57, Jun. 1969, inked by Palmer.



Green Lantern/Green Arrow #88.



Brave & Bold #83, May, 1969.



Green Lantern/Green Arrow #86, Nov. 1971, inked by Dick Giordano.



Brave & Bold #85, Sep. 1969.



Strange Adventures #208, Jan. 1968.



X-Men #57, Jun. 1969, inked by Palmer.



Green Lantern/Green Arrow #85.



WHEN I DID THE STERANKO EFFECT PANEL IN DEADMAN," ADAMS SAID, "I WAS TIPPING MY HAT TO HIM. I NEVER FELT IN ANY WAY COMPETITIVE. WHAT STERANKO DID AT THE TIME HAD ALMOST NO RELATIONSHIP TO WHAT I DID. WE WEREN'T TRYING TO DO THE SAME THING. I FELT WE WERE A COMMUNITY. LIKE STERANKO, I WAS SOMEBODY WITH A REASONABLE KNOWLEDGE OF THINGS THAT WERE COMMON OUTSIDE OF COMIC BOOKS. SUDDENLY STEPPING INTO THE FIELD AND BAM! SLAPPING EVERY BODY IN THE FACE."

"HE [STERANKO] WAS DEFINITELY A GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATOR. HIS GOAL WAS TO CREATE NEW AND IMPACTFUL IMAGES GRAPHICALLY. STERANKO WAS LOOKING TO PUNCH YOU IN THE FACE THAT CAME FROM KIRBY."

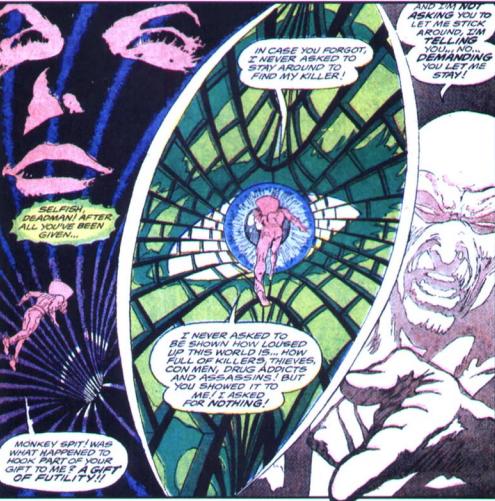
"I WAS COMING FROM A MORE TRADITIONAL BACKGROUND AND DIRECTION. I TENDED TO DO A BETTER DRAWING. HE DESPIRED REALISM EXCEPT WHERE IT RELATED TO GRAPHICS. GRAPHICS WERE NOT MY ONLY FOCUS; THEY WEREN'T HIS.

ONLY FOCUS EITHER, BUT THEY WERE CERTAINLY OVERPOWERING. "I WAS DOING MANY OTHER THINGS, LEVEL AFTER LEVEL. I WAS THRILLED WITH THE PAGE, WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIMENT, AS WAS STERANKO. HE WAS, IN SOME WAYS, MUCH MORE AGGRESSIVE. HE WAS ALSO VERY AWARE OF THE MODERN WORLD. HIS WORK SAYS, IN EFFECT, 'WAKE UP EVERYBODY! DON'T YOU KNOW WE'RE HERE?'"

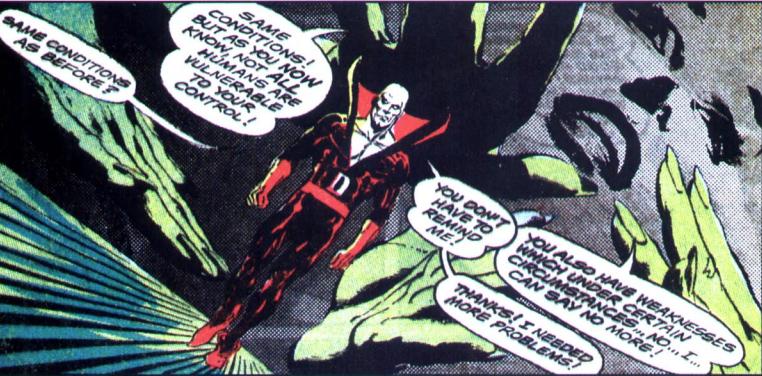
"NEAR ADAMS IS DOING WORK THAT IS PROBABLY UNSURPASSABLE. I'M A GREAT ADMIRER OF ALL OF HIS PROCEEDINGS. I THINK NEAL IS THE MOST TALENTED OF THE NEWCOMERS IN THE BUSINESS. NEAL DID THE BEN CASEY STRIP FOR YEARS AND YEARS, SO HE'S GOT THREE TIMES AS MUCH MORE DRAWING TIME IN THAN I DO, BUT AS A COMIC BOOK ARTIST, HE'S VERY EXCITING, DOING A LOT OF IMAGINATIVE THINGS."

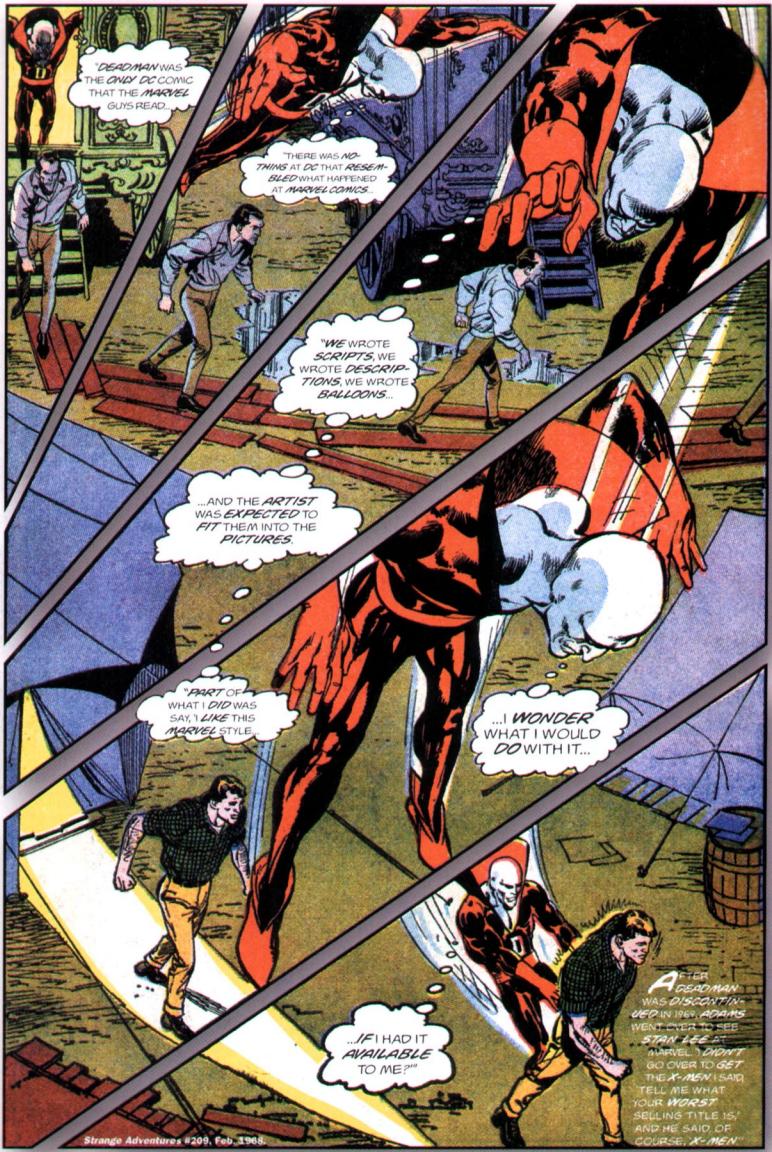
— JIM STERANKO, 1970

Above: Jim Steranko, 1971.



Above and below: Strange Adventures #216, Feb. 1969.





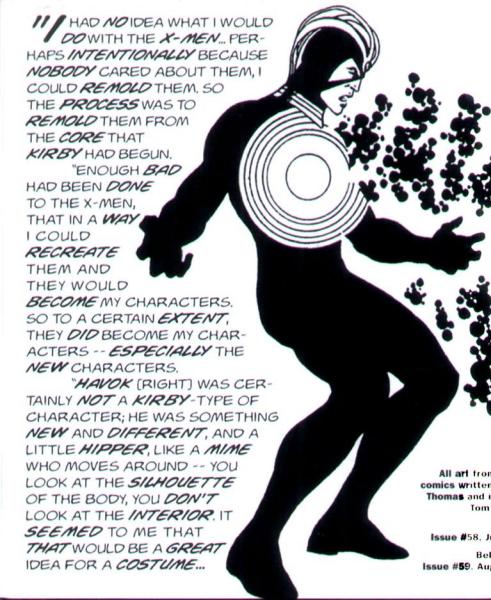
Strange Adventures #209, Feb. 1968.



"WHAT IS THE GREATEST DIMENSION ON A COMIC BOOK PAGE THAT I COULD MAKE SOMEBODY FALL FROM? I REALIZED IT WASN'T FROM THE TOP TO THE BOTTOM - IT WAS DIAGONALLY, TO SOCK YOUR EYE BACK UP TO THE TOP OF THE PAGE."

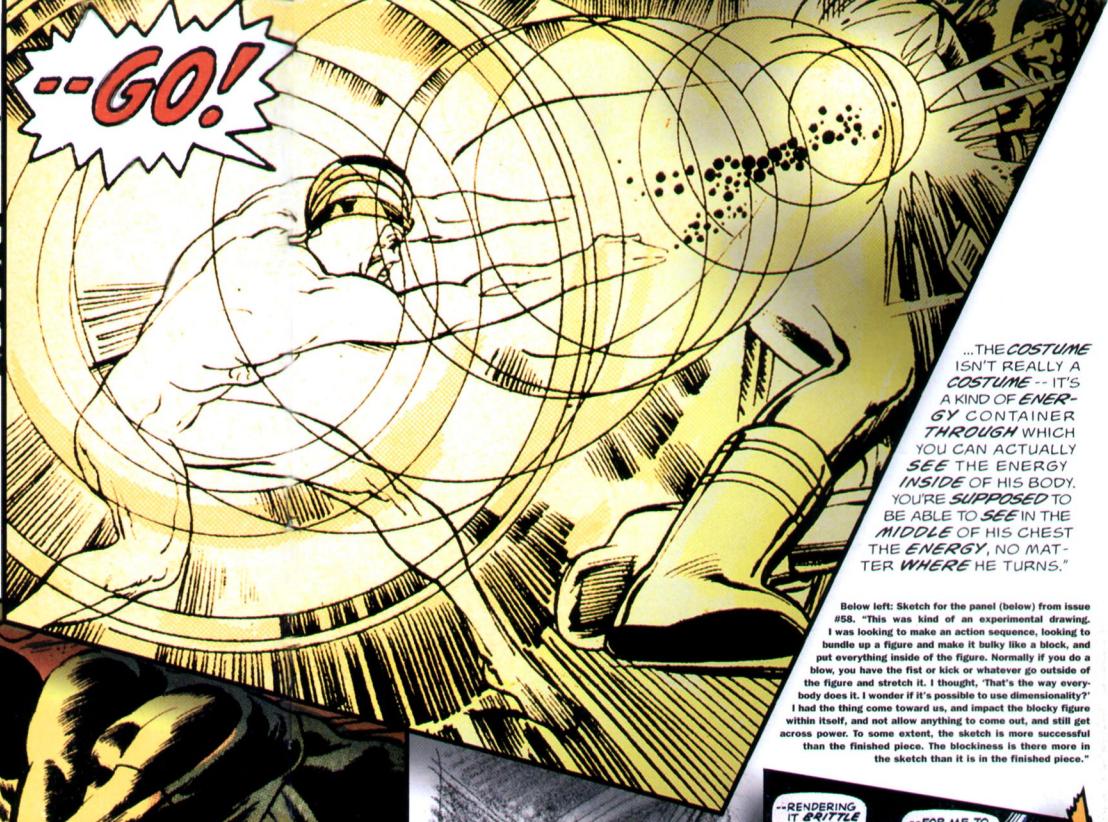
"I HAD NO IDEA WHAT I WOULD DO WITH THE X-MEN. PERHAPS INTENTIONALLY BECAUSE NOBODY CARED ABOUT THEM, I COULD REMOLD THEM SO THE PROCESS WAS TO REMOLD THEM FROM THE CORE THAT KIRBY HAD BEGIN. 'ENOUGH BAD HAD BEEN DONE TO THE X-MEN, THAT IN A WAY I COULD RECREATE THEM AND THEY WOULD BECOME MY CHARACTERS. SO TO A CERTAIN EXTENT, THEY DID BECOME MY CHARACTERS -- **ESPECIALLY** THE NEW CHARACTERS.

"HANOR (RIGHT) WAS CERTAINLY NOT A KIRBY-TYPE OF CHARACTER; HE WAS SOMETHING NEW AND DIFFERENT, AND A LITTLE HIPPER, LIKE A MIME WHO MOVES AROUND -- YOU LOOK AT THE SILHOUETTE OF THE BODY, YOU DON'T LOOK AT THE INTERIOR. IT **SEEMED** TO ME THAT THAT WOULD BE A GREAT IDEA FOR A COSTUME..."



All art from X-Men
comics written by Roy
Thomas and inked by
Tom Palmer.

Right:
Issue #58, Jul. 1969
Below left:
Issue #59, Aug. 1969.



...THE COSTUME ISN'T REALLY A COSTUME -- IT'S A KIND OF ENERGY CONTAINER THROUGH WHICH YOU CAN ACTUALLY SEE THE ENERGY INSIDE OF HIS BODY. YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE ABLE TO SEE IN THE MIDDLE OF HIS CHEST THE ENERGY, NO MATTER WHERE HE TURNS."

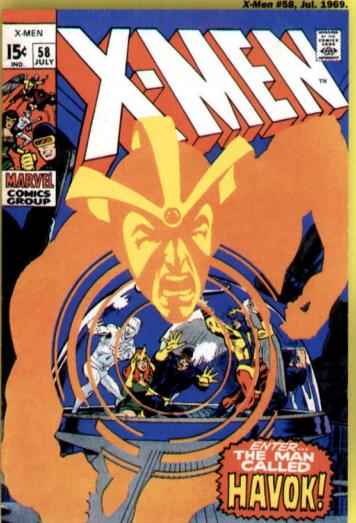


Below left: Sketch for the panel (below) from issue #58. "This was kind of an experimental drawing. I was looking to make an action sequence, looking to bundle up a figure and make it bulky like a block, and put everything inside of the figure. Normally if you do a blow, you have the fist or kick or whatever go outside of the figure and stretch it. I thought, 'That's the way everybody does it. I wonder if it's possible to use dimensionality?' I had the thing come toward us, and impact the blocky figure within itself, and not allow anything to come out, and still get across power. To some extent, the sketch is more successful than the finished piece. The blockiness is there more in the sketch than it is in the finished piece."

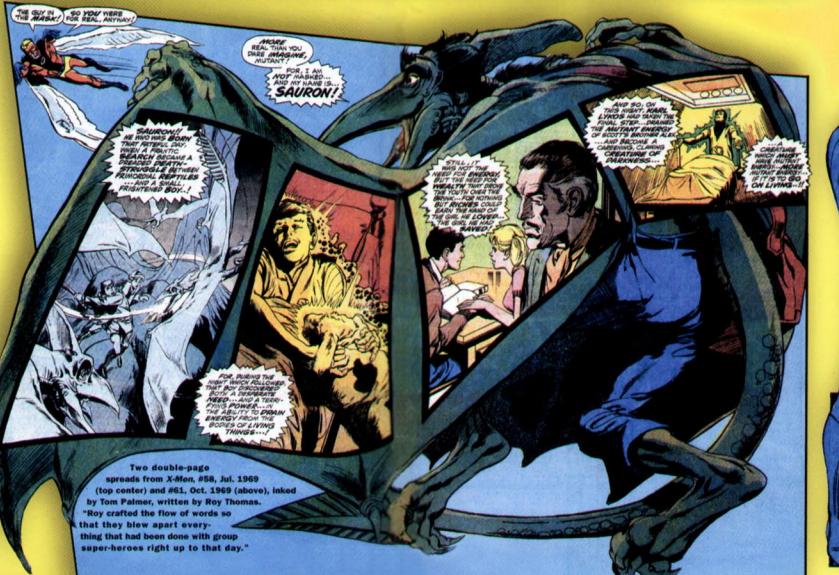
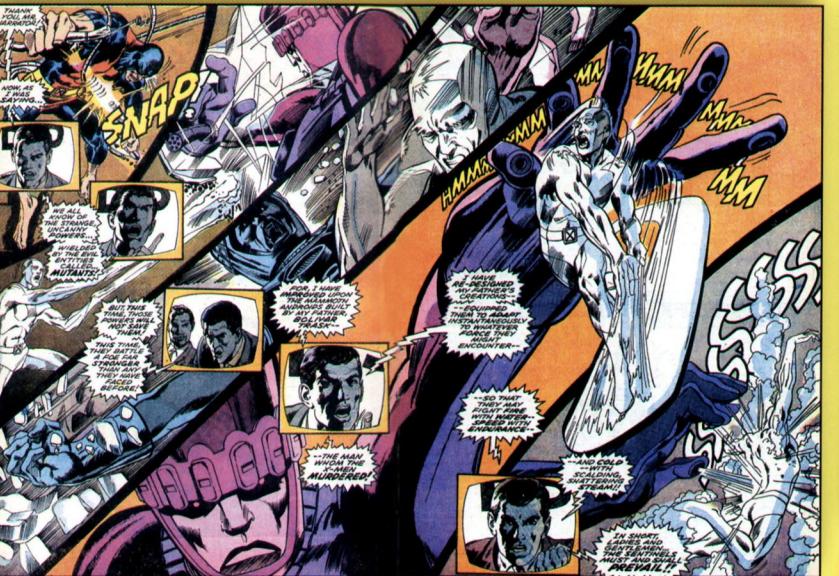


Strange Adventures #216, Feb. 1969.

"I DON'T THINK OF MYSELF AS AN ARTIST;
I THINK OF MYSELF AS A STORYTELLER. THE
ART IS THE FACILITY I LEARNED ALONG THE WAY
IN ORDER TO TELL A STORY."



Two double-page spreads from *X-Men*, #58, Jul. 1969 (top center) and #61, Oct. 1969 (above), inked by Tom Palmer, written by Roy Thomas.
"Roy crafted the flow of words so that they blew apart every-thing that had been done with group super-heroes right up to that day."



RELATIVE TO **STYLE**, I TREAT EACH PROJECT THAT I DO **UNIQUELY** FOR THAT PROJECT. WHEN DID THE **X-MEN**, I DECIDED HOW I WANTED TO DO **X-MEN**; IT REALLY HAD **NOTHING** TO DO WITH **LEADMAN** OR **BATMAN**; I FELT THE PROJECT DESERVED MY **UNIQUE** REPRESENTATION."

"Batman was never my character. I kind of turned him into my character," said Adams. Left: *Brave & Bold* #84, Sep. 1969, written by Bob Haney. "People remember the Bob Haney *Brave & Bold*s," Adams said. "They all had great

THERE HE IS, BRUCE, THE BEGINNINGS AND GREAT ENDINGS. THEY HAD DRAMA IN THE MIDDLE. THEY HAD FLESH

ARCHANGEL GABRIEL SMUGLED OUT OF NAZI OCCUPIED FRANCE DURING WORLD WAR II FOR SAFEKEEPING HERE. IN GOTHAM MUSEUM? NOW, AFTER ALL, HE'S BEEN FOUND.

THESE YEARS, I GOT A CALL FROM SOMEONE FINALLY CLAIMING IT! all strong."

5. *Wetland* (1996)

19. *Leucosia* (Leucosia) *leucosia* (L.)

THAT'S WHY I CALLED -

YOU... HE SAID HE'D PICK
IT UP TONIGHT, BUT HE HAD
A GERMAN ACCENT... NOT A
FRENCH ONE! AS MUSEUM

CURATOR, I'M PAID TO BE SUSPICIOUS. . .!

1990: *Superman II* (1980)

A GERMAN ACCENT, EH, WYATT? IT
TAKES A LOT OF PRACTICE, I TELL YOU.

FIGURES? IF HE SHOWS UP, DON'T LET HIM HAVE IT, BECAUSE THE REAL ARCHANGEL CLOCK'S STILL IN FRANCE! THIS THING'S A... FAKE!

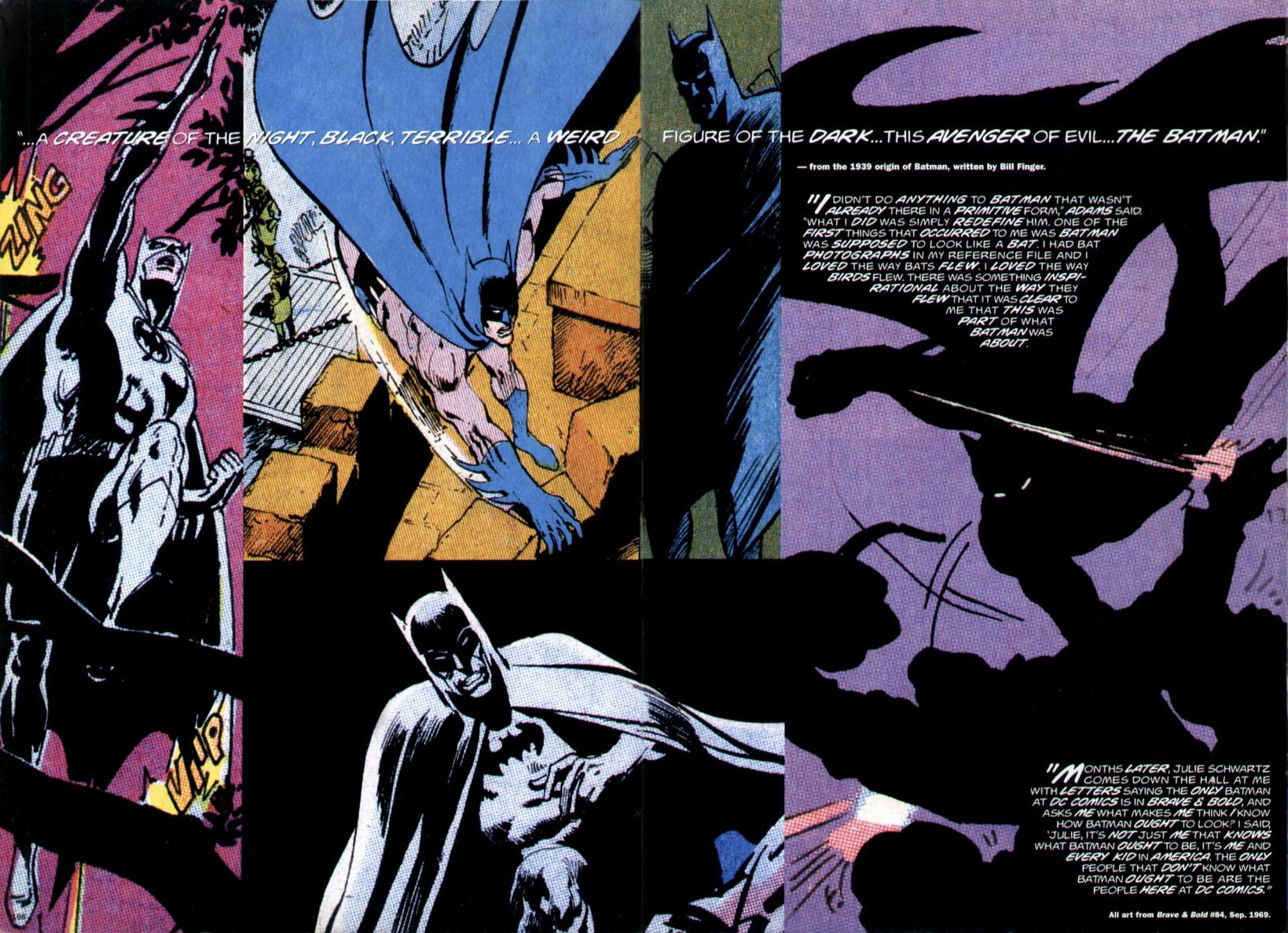
THIS LUGER IS NO
FAKE! AND, WITH
THOSE WORDS, YOU
HAVE PURCHASED A
TRUE CLASSIC.

MANIC INFLUENCED YOUR OWN DEATHS!

He was a man of the world, and he had a good deal of money.

SHADES OF GREEN

DO YOU HEAR A GHOST?
THERE'S A GHOST THERE?



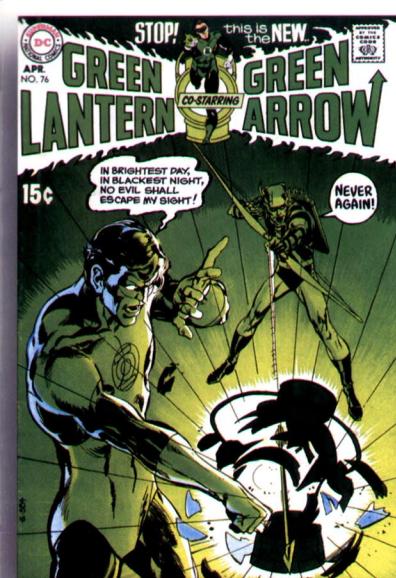
"...A CREATURE OF THE NIGHT, BLACK, TERRIBLE... A WEIRD

FIGURE OF THE DARK...THIS AVENGER OF EVIL...THE BATMAN."

— from the 1939 origin of Batman, written by Bill Finger.

"I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING TO BATMAN THAT WASN'T ALREADY THERE IN A PRIMITIVE FORM," ADAMS SAID. "WHAT I DID WAS SIMPLY REDEFINE HIM. ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS THAT OCCURRED TO ME WAS BATMAN WAS SUPPOSED TO LOOK LIKE A BAT. I HAD BAT PHOTOGRAPHS IN MY REFERENCE FILE AND I LOVED THE WAY BATS FLEW. I LOVED THE WAY BIRDS FLEW. THERE WAS SOMETHING INSPIRATIONAL ABOUT THE WAY THEY FLEW THAT IT WAS CLEAR TO ME THAT THIS WAS PART OF WHAT BATMAN WAS ABOUT."

"MONTHS LATER, JULIE SCHWARTZ COMES DOWN THE HALL AT ME WITH LETTERS SAYING THE ONLY BATMAN AT DC COMICS IS IN BRAVE & BOLD, AND ASKS ME WHAT MAKES ME THINK I KNOW HOW BATMAN OUGHT TO LOOK? I SAID, JULIE, IT'S NOT JUST ME THAT KNOWS WHAT BATMAN OUGHT TO BE, IT'S ME AND EVERY KID IN AMERICA. THE ONLY PEOPLE THAT DON'T KNOW WHAT BATMAN OUGHT TO BE ARE THE PEOPLE HERE AT DC COMICS."



Grave & Bold #85, Sep. 1969

"**T**HE STUFF THAT WAS IN THESE COMIC BOOKS WAS INSIDE DENNIE O'NEIL. HE WAS A PRODUCT OF THE 60'S WHEN ALL THOSE ISSUES AROSE, AND HE FELT VERY STRONGLY ABOUT THEM AND SOME OF THAT ANGER WAS AVAILABLE TO TAKE THAT AND TURN IT INTO SOMETHING THAT PEOPLE HADN'T SEEN BEFORE. I WAS LIKE A DIRECTOR WHO HAD FOUND HIS WRITER WHO HAD FOUND HIS THEME."



Sequence from issue #76, written by Denny O'Neil. "A lot of people think this [second panel] was drawn from a photograph," Adams said. "I would crave for a photograph like that."

THE FABULOUS FE ARE TRAPPED IN THE INCREDIBLE REALM

"THE BLACK PANTHER!"



Lee and Kirby's Black Panther (African chieftain of fictional Wakanda) was not only the first black superhero...

...NOW THAT THE HUNT IS OVER... THE GAME IS ENDED... I SHALL OFFER YOU THE EXPLANATION... FOR YOU HAVE EARNED IT INDEED!



...but his debut in July of 1966 (in *Fantastic Four* #52) predates the formation of the Black Panther Party by three months.

"CAPTAIN AMERICA."



The second black superhero from the street (Adams: "Why don't we give him a regular name? How about John Stewart? He's an architect who's out of work."), with dialogue presaging David Duke's candidacy by over a decade. From *Green Lantern/Green Arrow* #87, Jan. 1972, inked by Dick Giordano.



...ALTHOUGH JAMES ONLY CONSULTED WITH ME ON GENERAL THEME CONCEPTS, IT WASN'T UNTIL THE END OF THE SERIES THAT I MADE ANY REAL STORY CONTRIBUTION, AND THAT WAS THE DRUG ISSUES.

Above: From *Green Lantern/Green Arrow* #85, Sep. 1972, the first part of the 2-part drug story, "Snowbirds Don't Fly."

WHEN EDITOR SCHWARTZ TOLD ADAMS IN 1971 THAT HE WAS PLANNING ON INTRODUCING ANOTHER GREEN LANTERN TO THE BOOK -- ANOTHER WHITE GREEN LANTERN -- ADAMS RESPONDED:



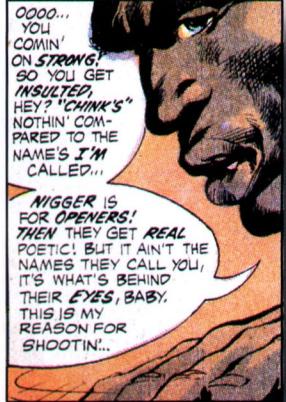
"AN ALIEN COMES TO EARTH WITH THIS LANTERN, AND GIVES IT TO THE MOST WORTHY PERSON ON EARTH, A WHITE, ANGLO-SAXON PROTESTANT AMERICAN AIRPLANE PILOT, THEN, THE ALIENS HAD TO HAVE A BACKUP GREEN LANTERN, SO THEY FIND A SECOND MOST-WORTHY MAN ON EARTH: A WHITE, BLONDE, AMERICAN GYM TEACHER, WELL, THAT'S KIND OF A STRETCH, CONSIDERING THE POPULATION OF THE WORLD, THEY HAD TO FIND ANOTHER WHITE GUY FOR THE THIRD TIME? THERE AREN'T ANY ASIANS OR BLACKS IN THE WORLD WHO ARE LANTERN-WORKERS? THEY WE OUGHT TO HAVE A BLACK GREEN LANTERN, NOT BECAUSE WE'RE LIBERALS, BUT BECAUSE IT JUST MAKES SENSE."

Above: The first African-American superhero from the street (Adams: "Why don't we give him a regular name? How about John Stewart? He's an architect who's out of work."), with dialogue presaging David Duke's candidacy by over a decade. From *Green Lantern/Green Arrow* #87, Jan. 1972, inked by Dick Giordano.



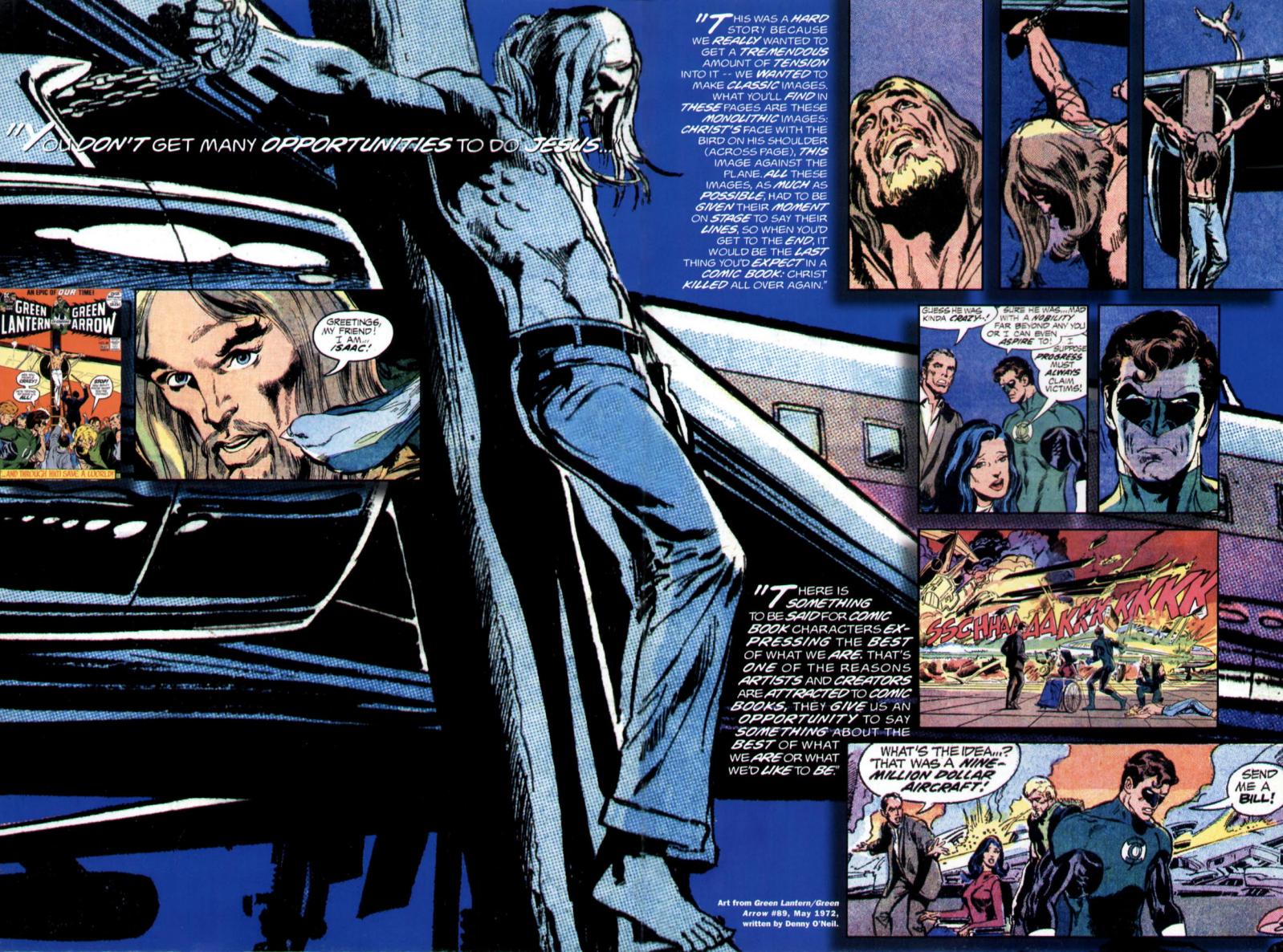
...ALTHOUGH JAMES ONLY CONSULTED WITH ME ON GENERAL THEME CONCEPTS, IT WASN'T UNTIL THE END OF THE SERIES THAT I MADE ANY REAL STORY CONTRIBUTION, AND THAT WAS THE DRUG ISSUES.

Above: From *Green Lantern/Green Arrow* #85, Sep. 1972, the first part of the 2-part drug story, "Snowbirds Don't Fly."



"DANNY AND I SPENT SOME TIME AT PHOENIX HOUSE AND PLACES LIKE THAT... I GOT TO SEE AN AWFUL LOT OF THAT CLOSE UP."

Above: From *Green Lantern/Green Arrow* #85. Left: From the cover of issue #87.



THOUGH THEIR DRAWING STYLES ARE ON OPPOSITE ENDS OF THE COMIC BOOK SPECTRUM, ADAMS' IMPACT ON THE MEDIUM CAN BE CONSIDERED AS GREAT AS JACK KIRBY'S. "YOU HAVE TO THINK OF KIRBY'S IMPACT IN A GENERAL SENSE," ADAMS SAID. "KIRBY'S A PHENOMENON AS WELL AS AN INSPIRATION. BUT NOBODY SAYS THEY WANT TO DRAW AS WELL AS KIRBY. HIS WORK IS LIKE THIS KIND OF WALL; IT WILL NEVER GET BETTER, IT WILL NEVER GET WORSE. IT'S JUST THERE -- IT FULFILLS ITSELF."

"MY WORK IS MORE LIKE A PROMISE. MY WORK SAYS, 'HERE'S THIS ROAD. HERE ARE SOME OF THE THINGS YOU CAN SEE ALONG THE ROAD. AND THERE'S NO END TO IT.'

"MY IMPACT, I THINK, IS ON A VERY PERSONAL, INDIVIDUAL LEVEL. IF YOU DO GOOD WORK AND YOU SUCCEED, THE THINGS PEOPLE TAKE AWAY FROM IT ARE AS INDIVIDUAL AS THEY ARE. THE DEPTH OF THE WORK WAS SUFFICIENT TO REACH DIFFERENT SPARKS IN EACH PERSON."

"IN A SENSE, MY WORK SAID YOU NOW HAVE PERMISSION TO DO GREAT ART IN COMIC BOOKS. THAT IF YOU THINK YOU'RE ONLY WORTHY OF PRODUCING FINE ART OR BECOMING GREAT IN ANOTHER FIELD, I NOW PRESENT COMIC BOOKS AS POTENTIAL. THE CHALLENGE IS, THIS IS WHAT I'VE DONE; WHAT CAN YOU DO?"



Cover of *The Art of Neal Adams, Volume #1*,
1975, colored by Richard Corben.

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FOOTNOTES

Licenses otherwise footnoted, all artists' quotes are from interviews conducted and edited by the author.

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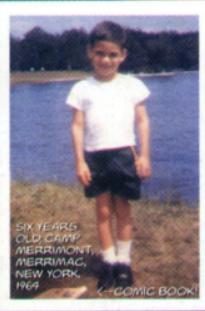
Man and SUPERMAN!

BY ARLEN SCHUMER
COLOR BY SHERRI WOLFGANG

MY FATHER DIED FOUR MONTHS AFTER I WAS BORN; MY BROTHER AND I WERE RAISED BY RELATIVES TO PROVIDE PROPER MALE ROLE MODELS. IN HER SENDING US TO SUMMER SLEEPAWAY CAMP WHEN WE WERE VERY YOUNG, I DID FIND A FATHER FIGURE THERE, BUT IT WASN'T ANY OF THE COUNSELORS... IT WAS SUPERMAN!

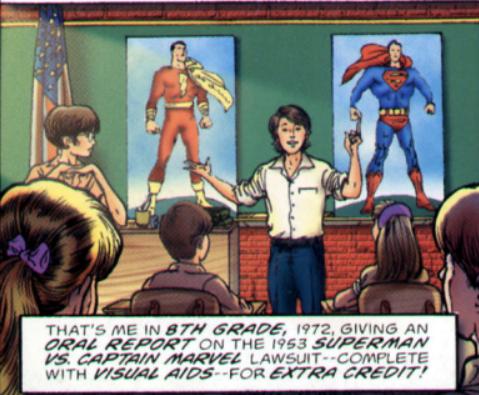
COMICS WERE A BIG PART OF CAMP;

THOUGH THERE WERE ALWAYS A FEW ARCHIES IN THE MIX, MOST WERE SUPERHEROES...



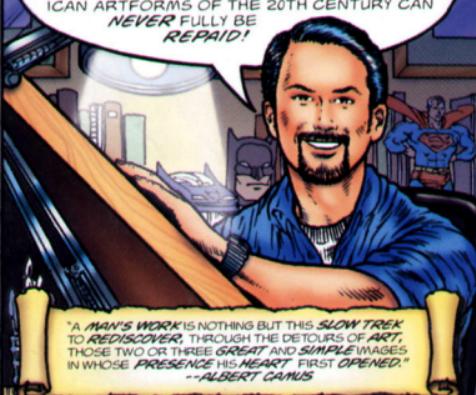
OF ALL THE SUPER-HEROES, SUPERMAN MADE THE BIGGEST IMPRESSION ON ME! I BARELY KNEW HOW TO READ, BUT I COULD "READ" SUPERMAN! THROUGH HIM, I UNDERSTOOD

COMIC BOOKS TAUGHT ME EVERYTHING I KNOW! HOW MANY OTHER 8-YEAR-OLDS HAD A VOCABULARY RIFE WITH WORDS LIKE INVULNERABLE, ELONGATED, INCOGNITO, ORIGIN -- AND HOAX! AND PHRASES LIKE, "TO NO AVAIL!"



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RIGHT AND WRONG -- WHAT IT MEANT TO BE A HERO! IF MORAL INSTRUCTION AND INSPIRATION ARE WHAT FATHERS ARE SUPPOSED TO PROVIDE, THEN SUPERMAN WAS MY DE FACTO FATHER

COMIC BOOK ART INSPIRED MY LIFE AND CAREER! THOUGH IT'S OFTEN TREATED LIKE A STEPCHILD BY MAINSTREAM CULTURE, THE DEBT I OWE ONE OF THE GREATEST AMERICAN ART FORMS OF THE 20TH CENTURY CAN NEVER FULLY BE REPAYED!



THE SILVER AGE OF COMIC BOOK ART

WRITTEN AND DESIGNED BY ARLEN SCHUMER

A book unlike any ever before seen, *The Silver Age of Comic Book Art* is multi-talented Arlen Schumer's dazzling pop-art tribute to the great mainstream artists working in the field of sequential art during the 1960s. Showcasing the author's brilliant combination of insightful prose and eye-popping graphic design, this book details the achievements of an amazing array of comics creators and the unforgettable characters they delineated during that turbulent decade: Jack Kirby's raging, thermonuclear-charged Hulk; the breathless excitement of Carmine Infantino's Flash; mind-expanding Steve Ditko's trippy Doctor Strange; Gil Kane's vibrantly heroic Green Lantern; the moody and dashing Daredevil by Gene Colan; the explosive dynamism of Neal Adams' X-Men; Joe Kubert's gritty, two-fisted soldier, Sgt. Rock; and Steranko's innovative film noir-esque Nick Fury. Finally, in a glorious format befitting their stature as comic book art masters, the knights of the Silver Age are given their due.

Set between the dawning of the Space Age and the twilight of the Age of Aquarius, this magnificent volume reveals just what made these comics — and the supremely-talented craftsmen who illustrated them — so innovative and ground-breaking. Schumer expertly captures the mind-altering essence of those heady days, an era super-charged with creativity and change, when the lines between reality and fantasy blurred in the four-color panels of American superhero comics. The early 1960s "imaginary stories" — quaint and fanciful tales having little in common with the day's headlines — transformed over the years to become grippingly relevant parables using costumed characters to explore the ever-so real issues facing American society during those incendiary times: Vietnam, drugs, civil rights, feminism, pollution, and myriad other hot-button controversies of the day. This is the story of how mainstream comics adapted to the winds of change in American life and how an extra-ordinarily talented group of artists rose to the challenge, determined to infuse their art form with significance and meaning.

Ultimately, what is so extraordinary about this masterwork is the sheer appropriateness of the author's approach to a subject of which he is so knowledgeable and articulate. In tackling the saga of a group of artisans working in outrageous times, Schumer painstakingly melds commanding and authoritative text (usually integrating the artists' own words) with mind-blowing graphic layouts to create a totally new kind of history, in a form superbly grasping what it is that

new kind of history, in a form superbly grasping what it is that makes the medium a uniquely American art form, the combining of words and pictures to create something new: the comic book.

— Jon B. Cooke

Editor, *Comic Book Artist* magazine

"Arlen Schumer documents an important period in comic book history, told with an explosive format and stunning design. It reflects the kinetic rhythm of the era."

— Will Eisner

Comics' greatest innovator, creator of *The Spirit* and father of the graphic novel

"A lovingly crafted tribute to the superhero comic of the 1960s, *The Silver Age of Comic Book Art* recaptures the four-color visionary surge of the era, its jet-age psychedelic rush of imagination and the titanic, luminous figures, both real and imaginary, that glittered in its firmament. For a brief moment in the late 20th century, it seemed as if the spirit of the age wore a vivid leotard, a chest emblem, and traveled in a strobing blur of speed lines. For anyone with any interest in or affection for that moment, this beautiful volume is indispensable."

— Alan Moore

Author of *Watchmen*, *From Hell*, and *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*

Arlen Schumer

As one of the foremost historians of comic book art, Schumer has written for *Print* magazine and numerous comic book industry trade publications. He has lectured at universities and cultural institutions across the country, most recently at the CUNY Graduate Center in New York City, where he presented, "Superheroes in the 1960s: Comics & Counterculture," based on this book. As a co-founder and partner — with wife Sherri Wolfgang — of the Dynamic Duo Studio, Schumer is one of the field's most idiosyncratic practitioners, creating comic book-styled art for advertising and editorial markets, their work gracing such diverse publications as *The New York Times*, *Wired* magazine and *Rolling Stone*. His other books include *Visions From the Twilight Zone*, and *Neal Adams: The Sketch Book*. He lives in Westport, Connecticut, with his wife and two daughters, Maya and Eden.



Photo: David O'Connor



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